

July 2013

This document was OCR'd using *Omnipage Professional 17*. It was then edited using *LibreOffice 4.0.3.3*, to correct errors in OCR, and to update spellings. Additionally, the *Compact Edition of the Oxford English Dictionary, First Edition*, was consulted to annotate archaic and obsolete words with their modern equivalents. *Queen Anna's New World of Words, or Dictionary of the Italian and English Tongues*, by John Florio, 1611, was consulted in the case of Italian words. The goal of this exercise was to create a document based upon the translation of 1594, freed from the confusions of Elizabethan typesetting and reflecting the changes in language while so far as possible remaining true to the original in meaning, and by so doing making Giacomo Di Grassi's *True Art of Defence* more accessible to the modern fencing community; it remains to be seen how successful was this attempt. The original page/text arrangements have been maintained, such that one may easily flip back and forth between this document and the original Thomas Churchyard document, including the odd page identifiers. Thanks to the availability of scans held at [HTTP://www.thearma.org/Manuals/NewManuals/DiGrassi/digrassi.htm](http://www.thearma.org/Manuals/NewManuals/DiGrassi/digrassi.htm) it was possible to replace the woodcut illustrations with those from the original Italian edition. The initial capitals were victims of bad OCR, and have been replaced with dropcaps. The initial scanned document had irregular page formatting; this has been corrected such that the document may be printed on US Letter paper in Landscape mode with no difficulties.

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Please let me know if you post this to additional websites. I'm also interested in feedback, in regard to additional changes which might safely be made to make this more accessible language-wise.

This, and any additional manuals I apply this treatment to, may be found archived at [John R Mead Academia](#)

Academia link added August 2, 2017.

GIACOMO  
**Di Grassi his true Art of Defence,**

*plainly teaching by infallible Demonstrations,  
apt Figures and perfect Rules the manner and  
form how a man without other Teacher or*

*Master may safely handle all sorts of  
weapons as well offensive as defensive:*

*With a Treatise*

**Of Deceit or Falsing: And with a way or**  
*means by private Industry to obtain  
Strength, judgment and  
Activity.*

*First written in Italian by the fore-  
said Author, And Englished by  
I. G. gentleman.*

***Printed at London for I.I and are to be sold***  
within Temple Bar at the Sign of  
the Hand and Star  
1594

*To the Right Honorable my L. Borrow Lord  
Governor of the Breil, and Knight of the most ho-  
norable order of the Garter, T.C. wishes con-  
tinual Honor, worthiness of mind,*

*and learned knowledge, with increase  
of worldly Fame, & hea-  
venly felicity.*

Having a restless desire in the daily exercises of Pen to present some acceptable piece of work to your L. and finding no one thing so fit for my purpose and your honorable disposition, as the knowledge of Arms and Weapons, which defendeth life, country, & honor, I presumed to prefer a book to the print (translated out of the Italian language) of a gentleman's doing that is not so greedy of glory as many glorious writers that eagerly would snatch Fame out of other men's mouths, by a little labor of their own, But rather keeps his name unknown to the world (under a shamefast cloud of silence) knowing that virtue shines best & gets greatest praise where it makes smallest brag: for the goodness of the mind seeks no glorious guerdon [*reward*], but hopes to reap the reward of well doing among the ripest of judgment & worthiest of sound consideration, like unto a man that giveth his goods unto the poor, and makes his treasure house in heaven, And further to be noted, who can tarry till the seed sown in the earth be almost rotten or dead shall be sure in a bountiful harvest to reap a goodly crop of corn. And better it is to abide a happy season to see how things will prove, than suddenly to seek profit where slowly cometh commodity or any benefit will rise. Some say, that good writers do purchase small praise till they be dead, (Hard is that opinion.) and then their Fame shall flourish & bring forth the fruit that long lay hid in the earth.



*The Epistle Dedicatory.*

This gentleman, perchance, in the like regard smothers up his credit, and standeth careless of the world's report: but I cannot see him so forgotten for his pains in this work is not little, & his merit must be much that hath in our English tongue published so necessary a volume in such apt terms & in so big a book (besides the lively descriptions & models of the same) that shows great knowledge & cunning, great art in the weapon, & great surety of the man that wisely can use it, & stoutly execute it. All manner of men allows knowledge: then where knowledge & courage meets in one person, there is odds in that match, whatsoever manhood & ignorance can say in their own behalf. The fine book of riding has made many good horsemen: and this book of Fencing will save many men's lives, or put common quarrels out of use because the danger is death if ignorant people procure a combat. Here is nothing set down or speech used, but for the preservation of life and honor of man: most orderly rules, & noble observations, interlaced with wise council & excellent good words, penned from a fountain of knowledge and flowing wit, where the reasons run as freely as clear water cometh from a Spring or Conduit. Your L, can judge both of the weapon & words, wherefore there needs no more commendation of the book: Let it show itself, craving some countenance of your honorable censure: and finding favor and passage among the wise, there is no doubt but all good men will like it, and the bad sort will blush to argue against it, as knows our living Lord, who augment your L. in honor & deferred credit,

Your L., in all humbly at commandment,

Thomas Churchyard.

The Authors Epistle unto divers Noble  
men and Gentle-men.

*A*mong all the Prayers, wherein through the whole course of my life, I have asked any great thing at God's hands, I have always most earnestly beseeched, that (although at this present I am very poor and of base Fortune) he would notwithstanding give me grace to be thankful, and mindful of the good turneth which I have received. For among all the disgraces which a man may incur in this world, there is none in my opinion which causeth him to become more odious, or a more enemy to mortal men (yea, unto God himself) than ingratitude. Wherefore being in Treviso, by your honors courteously entreated, and of all honorably used, although I practiced little or naught at all to teach you how to handle weapons, for the which purpose I was hired with an honorable stipend, yet to show myself in some sort thankful, I have determined to bestow this my work upon your honors, employing my whole endeavor to show the way how to handle all sorts of weapons with advantage and safety. The which my work, because it shall find your noble hearts full of valor, will bring forth such fruit, being but once attentively read over, as that in your said honors will be seen in acts and deeds; which in other men scarcely is comprehended by imagination. And I, who have been and am most fervently affected to serve your Ls. for as much as it is not granted unto me, (in respect of your divers affairs) to apply the same, and take some pains in teaching as I always desired, have yet by this other way, left all that imprinted in your noble minds, which in this honorable exercise may bring a valiant man unto perfection.

Therefore I humbly beseech your honors, that with the same liberal minds, with the which you accepted of me, your Ls will also receive these my endeavors, & vouchsafe so to protect them, as I have always, and will defend your honors most pure and undefiled. Wherein, if I perceive this my first childbirth (as I have only published it to the intent to help & teach others) to be to the general satisfaction of all I will so strain: my endeavors in an other works which shortly shall show the way both how to handle all those weapons on horseback which here are taught on foot, as also all other weapons whatsoever.

Your honors most affectionate servant



*Giacomo di Grassi of Modena*

The Author, to the Reader.

**E**ven as from our swathing bands we carry with us (as it were) an unbridled desire of knowledge: So afterwards, having attained to the perfection thereof, there grows in us a certain laudable and fervent affection to teach others: The which, if it were not so, the world happily should not be seen so replenished with Arts and Sciences.

For if men generally were not apt to contemplation and searching out of things: Or if God had not bestowed upon every man the grace, to be able to lift up his mind from the earth, and by searching to find out the causeth thereof, and to impart them to those who are less willing to take any pains therein: it would come to pass, that the one part of men, as Lords and Masters, should bear rule, and the other part as vile slaves, wrapped in perpetual darkness, should suffer and lead a life unworthy the condition of man. Wherefore, in my opinion it standeth with great reason that a man participate that unto others which he has searched and found out by his great study & travail. And therefore, I being even from my childhood greatly delighted in the handling of weapons after I had spent much time in the exercise thereof, was desirous to see and behold the most excellent and expert masters of this art, whom I have generally marked, to teach after divers ways, much differing one from another, as though this mystery were destitute of order & rule, or depended only upon imagination, or on the devise of him who professes the same: Or as though it were a matter impossible to find out in this honorable exercise (as well as in other Arts and Sciences) one only good and true way, whereby a man may attain to the entire knowledge of as much as may be practiced with the weapon, not depending altogether upon his own head, or learning one blow today of one master, on the morrow of another, thereby busying himself about particulars, the knowledge whereof is infinite, therefore

impossible. Whereupon being forced, through a certain honest desire which I bear to help others, I gave myself wholly to the con-

## To the Reader.

templation thereof: hoping that at the length I should find out the true principles and grounds of this art, and reduce the confused and infinite number of blows into a compendious sum and certain order: The which principles being but few, and therefore easy to be known and born away, without doubt in small time, and little travail, will open a most large entrance to the understanding of all that which is contained in this art, Neither was I in this frustrate at all of my expectation: For in conclusion after much deliberation, I have found out this art, from the which only depends the knowledge of all that which a man may perform with a weapon in his hand, and not only with those weapons which are found out in these our days, but also with those that shall be invented in time to come: Considering this art is grounded upon Offence and Defence, both the which are practiced in the straight and circular lines, for that a man may not otherwise either strike or defend.

And because I purpose to teach how to handle the Weapon, as orderly and plainly as is possible: I have first of all laid down the principles or grounds of all the art, calling them *Advertisements*, the which, being of their own nature very well known to all those that are in their perfect wits: I have done no other than barely declared them, without rendering any further reason, as being a thing superfluous.

These principles being declared, I have next handled those things, which are, and be, of themselves, *Simple*, then (ascending up to those that are *Compound*) I show that which may be generally done in the handling of all Weapons. And because, in teaching of Arts and Sciences, *Things* are more to be esteemed of than *Words*, therefore I would not choose in the handling hereof a copious and sounding kind of speech, but rather that which is more brief and familiar. Which manner of speech as in a small bundle, it contains divers weighty things, so it craves a slow and discrete Reader, who will soft and fair pierce into the very Marrow thereof.

For this cause I beseech the gentle Reader to show himself such a one in the reading of this my present work, assuring himself by so reading it, to reap great profit and honor thereby.

To the Reader.

Not doubting but that he (who is sufficiently furnished with this knowledge, and has his body proportionably exercised thereunto) shall far surmount any other although he be endowed with equal force and swiftness.

Moreover, because this art is a principal member of the *Military profession*, which altogether (with learning) is the ornament of all the World, Therefore it ought not to be exercised in Brawls and Frays, as men commonly practice in every shire, but as Honorable Knights, ought to reserve themselves,  
& exercise it for the advantage  
of their Country, the honor of  
women, and conquering of Hosts and  
armies.

An Advertisement to the  
courteous reader.

**G**ood Reader, before thou enter into the discourse of the hidden knowledge of this honorable exercise of the weapon now laid open and manifested by the author of this work, & in such perfection translated out of the Italian tongue, as all or most of the martial minded gentlemen of England cannot but commend, and no one person of indifferent judgment can justly be offended with, seeing that whatsoever herein is discoursed, tends to no other use, but the defence of man's life and reputation: I thought good to advertise thee that in some placeth of this book by reason of the equivocation of certain Italian words, the weapons may doubtfully be construed in English, Therefore sometimes finding this word Sword generally used, I take it to have been the better translated, if instead thereof the Rapier had been inserted: a weapon more usual for Gentlemen's wearing and fittest for causeth of offence and defence: Besides that, in Italy where Rapier and Dagger is commonly worn and used, the Sword (if it be not an arming Sword) is not spoken of. Yet would I not the sense so strictly to be construed, that the use of so honorable a weapon be utterly



## An Advertisement

*rejected, but so read, as by the right and perfect understanding of the one, thy judgment may somewhat be augmented in managing of the other: Knowing right well, that as the practice and use of the first is commendable amongst them so the second cannot so far be condemned, but that the wearing thereof may well commend a man of Valor and reputation amongst us. The Sword and Buckler fight was long while allowed in England (and yet practice in all sorts of weapons is praiseworthy,) but now being laid down, the sword but with Serving-men is not much regarded, and the Rapier fight generally allowed, as a weapon because most perilous, therefore most feared, and thereupon private quarrels and common frays soonest shunned.*

*But this piece of work, gentle Reader, is so gallantly set out in every point and parcel, the obscurest secrets of the handling of the weapon so clearly unfolded, and the perfect demeaning of the body upon all and sudden occasions so learnedly discoursed, as will glad the understander thereof, & sound to the glory of all good Masters of Defence, because their art is herein so honored, and their knowledge (which some men count infinite) in so singular a science, drawn into such Grounds and Principles, as no wise man of an impartial judge-*

## To the Reader.

*ment, and of what profession so ever, but will confess himself in courtesy far indebted both to the Author & Translator of this so necessary a Treatise, whereby he may learn not only through reading & remembering to furnish his mind with resolute instructions, but also by practice and exercise gallantly to perform any conceited enterprise with a discrete and orderly carriage of his body, upon all occasions whatsoever.*

*Gentle Reader, what other escapes or mistakings shall come to thy view, either friendly I entreat thee to bear with them, or courteously with thy pen for thine own use to amend them.*

*Farewell.*

*The Sorts of Weapons handled  
in this Treatise.*

*The single Rapier, or single Sword.*

*The rapier and dagger &c.*

*The rapier and Cloak &c.*

*The sword and Buckler.*

*The Sword and square target.*

*The sword and round target.*

*The Case of Rapiers.*

*The two hand Sword.*

*The weapons of the Staff, As*

*The Bill, Partisan, Halberd and Javelin.*

*Falsing of Blows and Thrusts.*

*At single rapier &c.*

*At rapier and dagger &c.*

*At Cloak and rapier.*

*At sword & buckler, square target and round  
target.*

*At the two rapiers*

*At the two hand sword*

*At the Bill, Partisan, Javelin, and Halberd.*

*At the Pike.*

*The true Art of Defence exactly*

teaching the manner how to handle weapons safely, as well offensive as defensive, with a Treatise of Deceit or Falsing, and with a mean or way how a man may practice of himself to get Strength, Judgment, and Activity.

There is no doubt but that the Honorable exercise of the Weapon is made right perfect by means of two things, to wit: Judgment and Force: Because by the one, we know the manner and time to handle the weapon (how, or whatsoever occasion serves:) And by the other we have power to execute therewith, in due time with advantage.

And because, the knowledge of the manner and Time to strike and defend, doth of itself teach us the skill how to reason and dispute thereof only, and the end and scope of this Art consists not in reasoning, but in doing: Therefore to him that is desirous to prove so cunning in this Art, as is needful, It is requisite not only that he be able to judge, but also that he be strong and active to put in execution all that which his judgment comprehends and sees. And this may not be done without strength and activity of body: The which if happily it be

### *The true Art*

feeble, slow, or not of power to sustain the weight of blows, Or if it take not advantage to strike when time requires, it utterly remaineth overtaken with disgrace and danger: the which faults (as appears) proceed not from the Art but from the Instrument badly handled in the action.

Therefore let every man that is desirous to practice this Art, endeavor himself to get strength and agility of body, assuring himself, that judgment without this activity and force, avails little or nothing: Yea, happily giveth occasion of hurt and spoil. For men being blinded in their own judgments, and presuming thereon, because they know how, and what they ought to do, give many times the onset and enterprise, but yet, never perform it in act.

But least I seem to ground this Art upon dreams and monstrous imaginations (having before laid down, that strength of body is very necessary to attain to the perfection of this Art, it being one of the two principle beginnings first laid down, and not as yet declared the way how to come by and procure the same) I have determined in the entrance of this work, to prescribe first the manner how to obtain judgment, and in the end thereof by way of Treatise to show the means (as far forth as appertains to this Art) by the which a man by his own endeavor and travail, may get strength and activity of body, to such purpose and effect, that by the instruc-

### *Of Defence*

tions and reasons, which shall be here given him, he may easily without other master or teacher, become both strong, active and skillful.

#### *The means how to obtain Judgment.*

**A**lthough I have very much in a manner in all quarters of Italy, seen most excellent professors of this Art, to teach in their Schools, and practice privately in the Lists to train up their Scholars. Yet I do not remember that ever I saw any man so thoroughly endowed with this first part, to wit, Judgment, as is in that behalf required.

And it may be that they keep it in secret of purpose: for amongst divers disorderly blows, you might have seen some of them most gallantly bestowed, not without evident conjecture of deep judgment. But howsoever it be seeing I purpose to further this Art, in what I may, I will speak of this first part as aptly to the purpose, as I can.

It is therefore to be considered that man by so much the more waxeth fearful or bold, by how much the more he knows how to avoid

### *The true Art*

or not to eschew danger.

But to attain to this knowledge, it is most necessary that he always kept steadfastly in memory all these advertisements underwritten, from which springs all the knowledge of this Art. Neither is it possible without them to perform any perfect action for the which a man may give a reason. But if it so fall out that any man (not having the knowledge of these advertisements) perform any sure act, which may be said to be handled with judgment, that proceedeth of no other thing, than of very nature, and of the mind, which of itself naturally conceives all these advertisements.

1 First, that the right or straight Line is of all other the shortest: wherefore if a man would strike in the short line, it is requisite that he strike in the straight line.

2 Secondly, he that is nearest, hitteth soonest. Out of which advertisement a man may reap this profit, that seeing the enemy's sword far off, aloft and ready to strike, he may first strike the enemy, before he himself be struck.

3 Thirdly, a Circle that goeth compassing beareth more force in the extremity of the circumference, than in the center thereof.

4 Fourthly, a man may more easily withstand a small than a great force.

5 Fifthly, every motion is accomplished in time.

That by these Rules a man may get judgment,

### *Of Defence.*

it is most clear, seeing there is no other thing required in this Art, than to strike with advantage, and defend with safety.

This is done, when one striketh in the right line, by giving a thrust, or by delivering an edgeblow with that place of the sword, where it carries most force, first striking the enemy before he be struck: The which is performed, when he perceiveth himself to be more near his enemy, in which case, he must nimbly deliver it. For there are few nay there is no man at all, who (perceiving himself ready to be struck) giveth not back, and forsakes to perform every other motion which he has begun.

And forasmuch, as he knows that every motion is made in time, he endeavors himself so to strike and defend, that he may use as few motions as is possible, and therein to spend as little time. And as his enemy moveth much in divers times he may be advertised hereby, to strike him in one or more of those times, so out of all due time spent.

### *The division of the Art.*

**B**efore I come to a more particular declaration of this Art, it is requisite I use some general division. Wherefore it is to be understood that as in all other arts, so likewise in this (men forsaking the true science there oft in hope perad-



*Of the Sword.*

venture to overcome rather by deceit than true manhood) have found out a new manner of skirmishing full of falses and slips. The which because it somewhat and sometimes prevails against those who are either fearful or ignorant of their grounds and principles, I am constrained to divide this Art into two Arts or Sciences, calling the one the True, the other, the False art: But withal giving every man to understand, that falsehood hath no advantage against true Art, but rather is most hurtful and deadly to him that useth it.

Therefore calling away deceit for this present, which shall hereafter be handled in his proper place and restraining myself to the truth, which is the true and principle desire of my heart, presupposing that justice (which in every occasion approacheth nearest unto truth) obtaineth always the superiority, I say whosoever minds to exercise himself in this true and honorable Art or Science is requisite that he be endued with deep Judgment, a valiant heart and great activity, In which three qualities this exercise doth as it were delight, live and flourish.

*Of the Sword.*

**A**lbeit Weapons as well offensive as defensive be infinite, because all that whatsoever a man may handle to offend another or defend himself, either by flinging or keeping it

*Of the Sword.*

fast in his hand may in my opinion be termed Weapon. Yet notwithstanding, because, as I have before said, they be innumerable so that if I should particularly handle every one, besides the great toil and travail I should sustain, it would also doubtless be unprofitable, because the principles and grounds which are laid down in this Art, serve only for such weapons as are commonly practiced, or for such as happily men will use: and so leaving all those which at this present make not for my purpose, I affirm, that amongst all the weapons used in these days, there is none more honorable, more usual or more safe than the sword.

Coming therefore first to this weapon, as unto that on which is grounded the true knowledge of this Art, being of reasonable length, and having edges and point, wherein it seemeth to resemble every other weapon, It is to be considered, that forasmuch as it has no more than two edges and one point, a man may not strike with any other than with these, neither defend himself with any other than with these. Further all edgeblows, be they right or reversed, frame thither a circle or part of a circle: Of which the hand is the Center, and the length of the sword, the Diameter.

Whereupon he that would give either an edgeblow in a great compass, either thrust with the point of the sword, must not only be nimble of hand, but also must observe the time of advantage, which is, to know when his own sword is more

### *Of the Sword.*

near and ready to strike than his enemy's. For when the enemy fetcheth a compass with his sword, in delivering his stroke, at the length of the arm: if he then perceive himself to be nearer by half an arm, he ought not to care to defend himself, but with all celerity to strike, For as he hitteth home first, so he prevents the fall of his enemy's sword. But if he be forced to defend himself from any edgeblow, he must for his greater safety and ease of doing it, go and encounter it on the half sword that is hindermost: in which place as the enemy's sword carries less force, so is he more near at hand to offend him.

Concerning thrusting, or the most perilous blows of the point, he must provide so to stand with his body, feet and arms, that he be not forced, when he would strike, to lose time: The which he shall do, if he stand either with his arm so forward, either with his feet so backward, either with his body so disorderly, that before he thrust he must needs draw back his arm, help himself with his feet, or use some dangerous motion of the body, the which when the enemy perceiveth, he may first strike before he be struck. But when a man standeth in due order (which shall hereafter be declared) and perceiveth that there is less distance from the point of his sword, unto his enemy than there is from his enemy's sword unto him, In that case he must nimbly force on a strong thrust to the end he may hit home first.

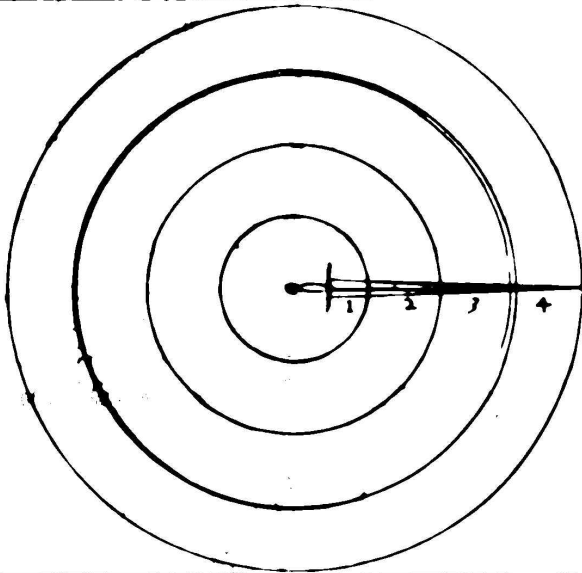
### *The division of the sword.*

For as much as the Effects which proceed from the length of the sword, are not in every part thereof equal or of like force: It standeth with reason besides the declaration of the cause, that I find out also the property and name of each part, to the end every man may understand, which are the parts of the length wherewith he ought to strike, and which the parts, wherewith he must defend.

I have said elsewhere, that the sword in striking frameth either a Circle, either a part of a Circle, of which the hand is the center. And it is manifest that a wheel, which moveth circularly, is more forcible and swift in the circumference than towards the Center: which wheel each sword resembleth in striking. Whereupon it seemeth convenient, that I divide the sword into four equal parts: Of the which that which is most near the hand, as most nigh to the cause, I will call the first part: the next, I will term the second, then the third, and so the fourth: which fourth part contains the point of the sword. Of which four parts, the third and fourth are to be used to strike withal. For seeing they are nearest to the circumference, they are most swift. And the fourth part (I mean not the tip of the point, but four fingers more within it) is the swiftest and strongest of all the rest: for besides that it is in the circumference, which causeth it to be most swift, it has

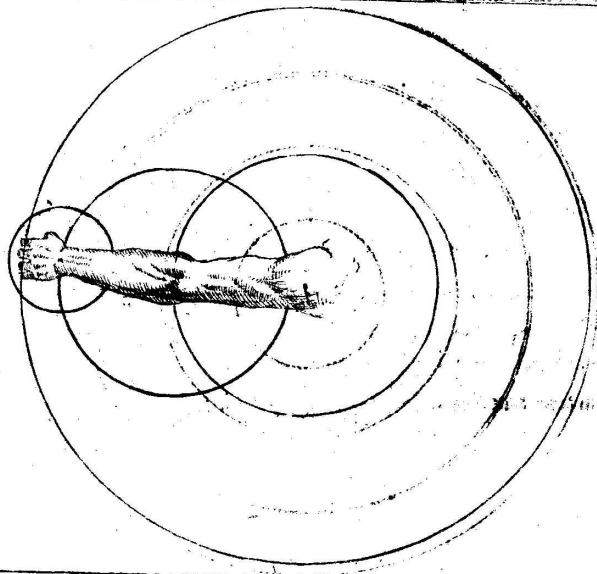
*Of the Sword.*

also four fingers of counterweight thereby making the motion more forcible. The other two parts, to wit, the first and second are to be used to ward withal, because in striking they draw little compass, and therefore carry with them but small force And for that their place is near the hand, they are for this cause strong to resist any violence.



*Of the Sword.*

**T**he Arm likewise is not in every part of equal force and swiftness, but differeth in every bowing thereof, that is to say in the wrist, in the elbow and in the shoulder: for the blows of the wrist as they are more swift, so they are less strong: And the other two, as they are more strong, so they are more slow, because they perform a greater compass. Therefore by my counsel, he that would deliver an edgeblow shall fetch no compass with his shoulder, because while he beareth his sword far off, he giveth time to the wary enemy to enter first: but he shall only use the compass of the elbow and the wrist: which, as they be most swift, so are they strong enough, if they be orderly handled.



*That every blow of the point of the sword striketh circularly and how he that striketh with the point, striketh straight.*

**H**aving before said and laid down for one of the principles of this art, that the straight Line is the shortest of all others (which is most true.) It seemeth needful that I make demonstration thereof. And further having suggested for a truth, that the blow of the point is

the straight stroke, this not being simply true, I think it expedient before I wade any further, to show in what manner the blows of the point are struck circularly, and how straightly. And this I will strain myself to perform as plainly and as briefly as possibly I may. Neither will I stretch so far as to reason of the blows of the edge, or how all blows are struck circularly, because it is sufficiently and clearly handled in the division of the Arm and sword.

Coming then to that which is my principle intent to handle in this place, I will show first how the arm when it striketh with the point, striketh circularly.

It is most evident, that all bodies of straight or long shape, I mean when they have a firm and immoveable head or beginning, and that they move with another like head, always of necessity in their motion, frame either a wheel or part of a circular figure. Seeing then the Arm is of like figure and shape, and is immovably fixed in the shoulder and further moveth only in that part which is beneath it, there is no doubt but that in his motion it figures also a circle, or some part thereof. And this every man may perceive if in moving his arm, he make trial in himself.

Finding this true, as without controversy it is, it shall also be as true, that all those things which are fastened in the arm, and do move as the Arm doth, must needs move circularly. Thus much concerning my first purpose in this Treatise.

*Of the Sword.*

Now I will come to my second, and will declare the reasons and ways by which a man striking with the point striketh straightly. And I say, that whensoever the sword is moved by the only motion of the Arm, it must always of necessity frame a circle by the reasons before alleged. But if it happen, as in a manner it doth always, that the arm in his motion make a circle upwards, and the hand moving in the wrist frame a part of a circle downwards then it will come to pass, that the sword being moved by two contrary motions in going forwards striketh straightly.

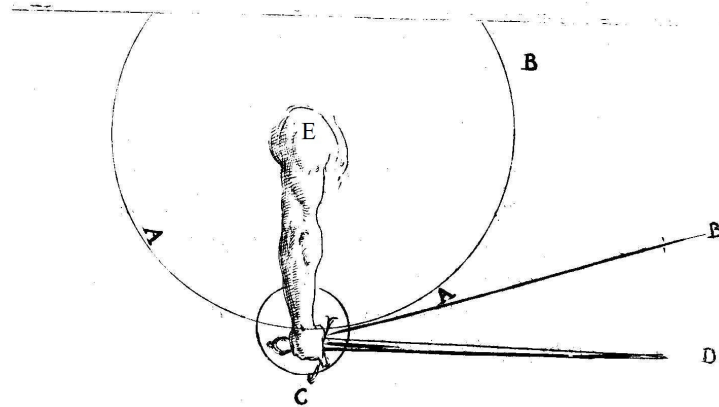
But to the intent that this may be more plainly perceived, I have framed this present figure for the better understanding whereof it is to be known, that as the arm in his motion carries the sword with it, and is the occasion that being forced by the said motion, the sword frames a circle upwards, So the hand moving itself in the wrist, may either lift up the point of the sword upwards or abase it downwards. So that if the hand do so much let fall the point, as the arm doth lift up the handle, it cometh to pass that the sword's point thrusts directly at another prick or point than that it respects.

Wherefore let  $\mathcal{AB}$  be the circle which is framed by the motion of the arm: which arm, if (as it carries with it the sword in his motion) it would strike at the point  $\mathcal{D}$  it should be constrained through his motion to strike at the point  $\mathcal{B}$ . And from hence proceedeth the difficulty of thrusting or

*Of the Sword.*

striking with the point. If therefore the arm would strike directly at the point  $\mathcal{D}$ , it is necessary that as much as it lifts the handle upwards, the hand-wrist do move itself circularly downward, making this circle  $\mathcal{AC}$  & carrying with it the point of the sword downwards, of force it striketh at the point  $\mathcal{D}$ . And this would not so come to pass, it with the only motion of the arm, a man should thrust forth the sword, considering the arm moveth only about the center  $\mathcal{C}$ .

Therefore seeing by this discourse it is manifest that the blow of the point, or a thrust, can not be delivered by one simple motion directly made, but by two circular motions, the one of the Arm the other of the hand, I will hence foreword in all this work term this blow the blow of the straight Line. Which considering the reasons before alleged, shall breed no inconvenience at all.



**M**ost great is the care and considerations which the paces or footsteps require in this exercise, because from them in a manner more than from any other thing springs all offence and defence. And the body likewise ought with all diligence to be kept firm and stable, turned towards the enemy, rather with the right shoulder, than with the breast. And that because a man ought to make himself as small a mark to the enemy as is possible, And if he be occasioned to bend his body any way, he must bend it rather backwards than forwards, to the end that it be far off from danger, considering the body can never

greatly move itself any other way more than that and that same way the head may not move being a member of so great importance.

Therefore when a man striketh, either his feet or his arm are thrust forwards, as at that instant it shall make best for his advantage. For when it hapneth that he may strongly offend his enemy without the increase of a pace, he must use his arm only to perform the same, bearing his body always as much as he may and is required, firm and immoveable.

For this reason I commend not their manner of fight, who continually as they fight, make themselves to show sometimes little, sometimes great, sometimes wresting themselves on this side, sometimes on that side, much like the moving of snails. For as all these are motions, so can they not be accomplished in one time, for if when they bear bodies low, they would strike aloft, of force they must first raise themselves, and in that time they may be struck. So in like manner when their bodies are writhed this way or that way.

Therefore, let every man stand in that order, which I have first declared, straining himself to the uttermost of his power, when he would either strike or defend, to perform the same not in two times or in two motions, but rather in half a time or motion, if it were possible.

As concerning the motion of the feet from which grow great occasions as well of offence as defence, I say and have seen by divers examples

as by the knowledge of their orderly and discreet motion, as well in the Lists as in common frays, there has been obtained honorable victory, so their busy and unruly motion have been occasion of shameful hurts and spoils. And because I can not lay down a certain measure of motion, considering the difference between man and man, some being of great and some of little stature: for to some it is commodious [*advantageous*] to make his pace the length of an arm, and to other some half the length or more. Therefore I advertise every man in at his wards to frame a reasonable pace, in such sort that if he would step forward to strike, he lengthen or increase one foot, and if he would defend himself, he withdraw as much, without peril of falling.

And because the feet in this exercise do move in divers manners, it shall be good that I show the name of every motion, to the end that using those names through all this work, they may the better be understood.

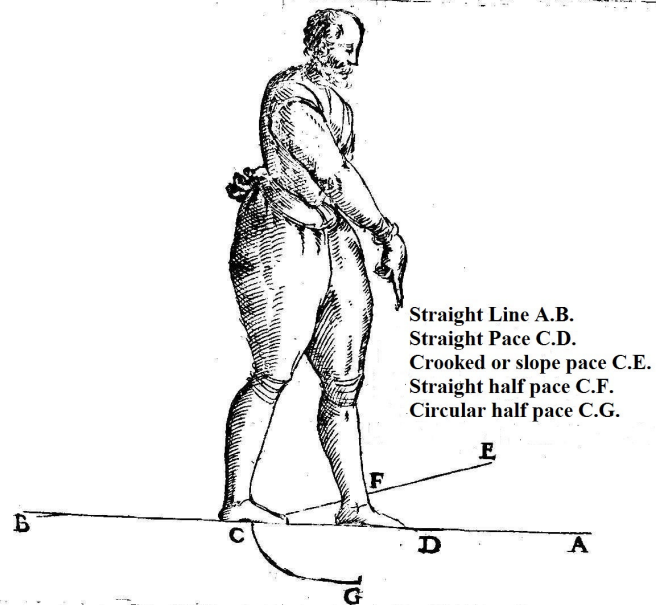
It is to be known that the feet move either straightly, either circularly: If straightly, then either forwards or backwards: but when they move directly forwards, they frame either a half or a whole pace. By whole pace is understood, when the foot is carried from behind forwards, keeping steadfast the fore foot. And this pace is sometimes made straight, sometimes crooked. By straight is meant when it is done in the straight line, but this doth seldom happen. By crooked or slope pace is understood when the hinder foot is brought also for-

wards, but yet athwart or crossing: and as it grows forwards, it carries the body with it, out of the straight line, where the blow is given.

The like is meant by the pace that is made directly backwards: but this back pace is framed more often straight than crooked. Now the middle of these back and fore paces, I will term the half pace: and that is, when the hinder foot being, brought near the fore foot, doth even there rest: or when from thence the same foot goeth forwards. And likewise when the fore foot is gathered into the hinder foot, and there doth rest and then retires itself from hence backwards. These half paces are much used, both straight & crooked, forwards & backwards. And in like sort, half paces forwards & backwards, straight and crooked.

Circular paces, are no otherwise used than half paces, and they are made thus: When one has framed his pace, he must fetch a compass with his hinder foot or fore foot, on the right or left side: so that circular paces are made either when the hinder foot standing fast behind, doth afterwards move itself on the left or right side, or when the fore foot being settled before doth move likewise on the right or left side: with all these sort of paces a man may move every way both forwards and backwards.

*Of Paces,*



*Of the agreement of the Foot  
And Hand.*

**T**he right Leg ought always to be the strength of the right hand, and likewise the left leg of the left hand: So that if at anytime it shall happen a thrust to be forcible delivered, reason would that it be accom-

*Of Paces.*

panied with the leg: for otherwise, by means of the force and weight, which is without the perpendicular or hanging line of the body, having no prop to sustain it, a man is in danger of falling. And it is to be understood, that the pace doth naturally so much increase or diminish his motion, as the hand. Therefore we see when the right foot is behind, the hand is there also: so that who so strains himself to stand otherwise, as he offers violence unto nature, so he can never endure it: wherefore when he standeth at his ward, bearing his hand wide, there also the foot helps by his strength, being placed towards that part: & when the hand is born a low, & the right foot before, if then he would lift his hand aloft, it is necessary that he draw back his foot: And there is so much distance from the place where the foot doth part, to join itself to the other foot, as there is from the place whence the hand parts, to that place when it remaineth steadfast, little more or less: wherefore, presupposing the said rules to be true, he must have great care to make his pace, & move his hand at one time together: And above all, not to skip or leap, but keep one foot always firm and steadfast: and when he would move it, to do it upon some great occasion, considering the foot ought chiefly to agree in motion with the hand, which hand, ought not in any case whatsoever happen to vary from his purpose, either in striking or defending,



## *Of Wards*



**W**ards in weapons are such sites, positions or placings which withstand the enemy's blows, and are as a shield or safeguard against them, For he who has no skill to carry his body and bear these weapons orderly, which either cover, or easily may cover the whole body, cannot be said to stand in ward, insomuch that a man ought to use great diligence in the apt carrying of his body and weapons, For many times he ought to settle and repose himself in his ward, therein deliberating upon some new devise, or expecting when his enemy will minister occasion to enter upon him.

The Wards which may be used with the single sword are threefold, Neither in my opinion may they be any more: for that one only straight line, which is the sword, may not cover, defend and easily offend after any other manner.

### *The high ward.*

**T**his high ward, which also might be called the first, being the very same which every man frames at the drawing of the sword out of the sheath, may so far forth, and insomuch be termed a ward, in how much, by turning the point of the sword downward, it wards the

whole person, and for that, by gathering in of the hinder foot, & increasing forwards with the right foot, a man may discharge a strong thrust above hand at his enemy.

In this, and in all other wards, it is diligently to be noted, that he bear his weapons so orderly disposed, that the straight line which goeth from the swords point be still bent to strike the enemy, either in the face or in the breast: for if the point be so born that it respect over the enemy's head, the enemy may easily first enter underneath & strike before the fall or descend thereof: And by holding the point to low, he may by beating it somewhat downwards cause it to be quit void of his body and so safely come in to strike, the which has been many times seen.

*The high ward.*

*The low ward.*



*The Broad Ward.*



**T**his second ward from the effect shall be called the broad or wide ward, because the Arm widening and stretching itself directly as much as is possible from the right side, beareth the sword so far off from the body that it seemeth to give great scope to the enemy to enter, albeit in truth it be nothing so. For although the hand & the handle of the sword, be both far from the body, and quite out of the straight line, yet the point of the sword, from which principally proceedeth the offence, is not

D

*The low ward.*

without the said line: For it is born so bending to ward the left side that it respects directly to strike the enemy, and being born in that sort, it may very well both strike and defend. And when the point of the sword is born out of the straight line, as the hand and handle is, than a man is in danger to be hurt easily by the enemy, the which hapneth not when the point is bending, for in such order, it is as a bar and defence to the whole body.

*The low ward.*

**T**his also from the effect is called the base ward, or lock: Neither is this name improperly given by the Professors of this Art, for that it is more strong, sure and commodious than any other ward, and in the which a man may more easily strike, ward & stand therein with less pain. This ward is framed in the Schools after divers fashions, either bearing the hand low before the knee, either very much stretched forwards, either between both the knees. All which fashions (if we regard natural reason, and the motions used therein) are to small purpose for, besides that they are all violent, and for a small time to be endured, they are also such, in the which a man may not strike but in two times or at the least in one, and then very weakly. Wherefore, casting all these aside, I will frame such a ward, as shall be applied, to time, to nature, and to safety: And it is, when one beareth his arm directly downwards near his knee (but yet without it) and his sword with the point somewhat raised, and bea-

*The low ward.*

ring towards the left side, to the end, it may aim and defend that part also, in such sort that (being born without violence) he may continue long. And if he would strike, he may in one time, forcibly deliver a great thrust. But this he cannot do, if he bear his sword directly before him, for then he must either draw back his arm when he would strike, or else strike in one time, but very weakly.

This ward therefore must be framed with the arm stretched downwards near the knee, but yet on the outside thereof, because after this manner a man standeth safely, commodiously, and more ready, both to strike and defend.



*The manner how to strike.*

**W**ithout all doubt, the thrust is to be preferred before the edgeblow, as well because it striketh in less time, as also for that in the said time, it doth more hurt.

For which consideration, the Romans (who were victorious in all enterprises) did accustom their soldiers of the Legions to thrust only: Alleging for their reason, that the blows of the edge, though they were great, yet they are very few that are deadly, and that thrusts, though little & weak, when they enter but three fingers into the body, are wont to kill. Therefore I lay down this for a firm and certain rule, that the thrust doth many times more readily strike, and give the greater blow against the enemy. And to the end, a man may thrust it out with the greatest force at the most advantage, and uttermost length that may be, he must always remember to carry his left foot compassing behind him in such sort, that the hinder foot so compassing may always be in the straight line of the hand and sword, as a Diameter in the midst of a Circle. And in finishing of the blow, to draw his hinder foot a half pace forwards, and so by that means the blow is longer & stronger, and the shoulder and side are only opposite to the enemy, and so far off from him, that they may not be struck: and it is not possible for a man to frame a longer blow than this.

*When it is better to strike with the edge.*

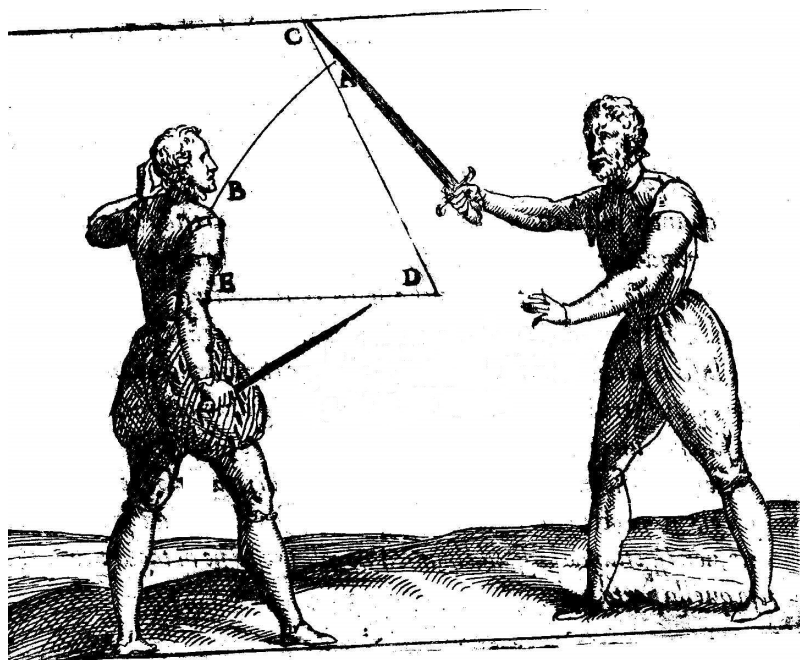
**F**or no other cause, the edge is preferred before the point, than for the time: the shortness whereof, is so to be esteemed above all other things in this art, that (omitting the point and edge) it ought to be given for the best and chief counsel, that same to be the better blow, in which a man spends least time. And therefore when this hapneth and may be done with the edge, then the edge is to be preferred before the point: the which as occasion serves shall be further declared.

When I reasoned of the blow of the point or thrust I said, that a man ought to thrust when the point is in the straight line, because the blow is then performed in one time. But the edge differeth from the point, in that that being out of the straight line, it endeavors to come into the same again. Therefore when it hapneth the point to be born either on the right, either on the left side, either aloft, out of the straight line, if then one would thrust in the right line, he cannot perform it but in two times, whereas if he would strike with the edge be it right or reversed, or downwards, he may do it in one time. It shall be also very commodious rather to strike with the edge, when as sometime a man bearing his sword in the straight line, and the enemy there finding it, doth with his hand beat it on this side or that side: In which case, if he would return it again into the said line of purpose to strike, he shall be constrained to do it with great violence and much time.

For these reasons I hold it better to let the sword sway to that side, whereto the enemy beats it, and to join unto it such force, as he may to help the motion, and (fetching withal a compass) to strike with the edge.

*The means how to defend.*

The which blow is so ready & strong, that the enemy can hardly have time to withstand it, being already occupied in beating aside the sword & pretending to strike: nothing at all expecting that the adversary's sword will strike again either so quickly, or with the edge, on that side from which it was beaten.



The Line of the edge is from A to B,  
The line of the point from C to D  
and from D to E.

*The means how to defend*

The means of defending a blow given either with the edge or point of the sword, are three. One is when the weapon is opposed to the blow, in such sort that the weapon which cometh sinking either at the head or at the body, cannot hit home to the place whereunto it is directed, but hindered by something or other than let against it, be it sword, dagger, target, bill, javelin, or anything else, which at that instant a man has in his hand. For it chanceth not always to wear or carry weapons of purpose, or ordained to that intent. Neither happily is it thought soldier or gentlemanlike, not to know how to strike or defend, but only with weapons framed to that end: for which cause, it may well be said, that the soldier differeth from other men, not because he is more skillful in handling the sword or javelin, but for that he is expert in every occasion to know the best advantage & with judgment both to defend himself with any thing whatsoever, and therewithal safely to offend the enemy: In which & no other thing consists true skirmishing.

He that persuades himself that he can learn this Art by the exercise of a few particular strokes of the point and edge is utterly deceived: for besides, that by those particular tricks, there is small knowledge gotten: So the chanceth in this art are so dangerous & divers, that it is impossible to deliberate suddenly, except he have the universal knowledge and understanding of all the rules and principles hereof, being grounded upon offending & defending, and not only upon the sword, the dagger, the target, the javelin & the bill. For a man at all times (when he is occasioned to strike

*The means how to defend.*

or defend) doth not carry these weapons about him, but is constrained to defend himself with a piece of wood from a javelin, with a stool or form [*bench*] from a sword, or with a cloak from a dagger, in which case men commonly use many other things not ordained for that purpose, doing that therewith which natural instinct teaches them. And this instinct is no other thing than the knowledge of the rules before laid down: which knowledge, because it is naturally grafted in the mind, is something the rather helped and qualified by art and makes a man so assured and bold, that he dares to enter on any great danger, and judges (when he sees the quality of the weapon, and the site wherein it is placed) what it may do, or in how many ways it may either strike or defend. From which his judgment springs the knowledge of all that he has to do, and how he has to handle himself to encounter any danger.

But returning to my purpose, to wit, of the way how to defend, which is to carry the weapon opposite, this manner is commonly used, but is not so profitable, being used as it is. And the reason is, because when men endeavor themselves to encounter or oppose themselves against the weapon which cometh to strike them, (neither making bold that their weapon can, neither knowing how it should defend) they withdraw their body with their foot, and commit all these faults following.

1 First, by withdrawing of themselves, they encounter the enemy's sword towards the point, in which place it beareth most force, and therefore with great difficulty they sustain the blow.

*The single Rapier*

2 Another is, if they would strike the enemy, of force they must return their feet and weapons thither, where they were before, and yet increase forwards somewhat more, if they would strongly strike him: And in this they spend so much time, that the enemy may not only easily defend, but also, very well and safely strike. To him then that would use this manner of defence without danger, it is necessary and needful, when he encountereth the enemy's sword, that he do not withdraw himself, but with his left foot increase a crooked or slope pace forwards, the which shall encounter the sword, which before was coming striking with the edge, on that part thereof, in which it has least power to offend, and shall by that means easily withstand the blow. But if the sword cometh with a thrust, he must find it and beat it aside: for every little motion is sufficient to drive the point far enough from danger of hurt. And there is this advantage gotten, as well in the blow of the edge as of the point, that the body is voided out of the straight line by means of the said slope pace: and it standeth so apt and so near to offend the enemy, that one may strike in the very instant, neither can the enemy so much withdraw himself as is sufficient to avoid the stroke: For a man has to use the straight pace of the right foot to follow the enemy, which pace is so strong and so swift, that the enemy may not avoid it. And because this manner of defence in my opinion, seemeth to be most sure and short, I will use it above all other.

There is another way, to wit, one perceiveth the enemy's sword in the delivery of an edge-

### *The single Rapier*

blow; to fetch a great compass, he may strike him before the fall of his sword with a thrust: or else when the enemy thrusts, (but yet spends many times in doing thereof) he may likewise strike him in as short time as may be. Which manner of defending is most profitable, & perchance the better of the two. For there is no man that will run himself headlong upon the weapon, or that, perceiving himself ready to be struck, will not suddenly draw back and withhold that blow which he had already prepared to discharge. And although there be some, who being struck run rashly on, yet generally, men will not so do, albeit they be awoken when they are most cholerick, but will, when they are struck or wounded, give back and be dismayed and by reason of the blood which goeth from them, always more & more be weakened.

But yet when they be so wounded it shall be for their profit to be well advised, and not to discomfort themselves for the greatness of the blow, but to bear it patiently: for that which they do in disdain and fury shall turn them to much displeasure.

3 The third manner of defence is, when the body voids out of the straight line towards this or that side, but this is seldom used alone & by itself, but rather accompanied with the opposing of the weapon, or with the second manner of defence aforesaid. If it be used alone, the manner is to let slip the blow, and to strike the enemy in the same time that he is overreached in his blow.

### *The single Rapier*

9



*The method which shall be used in handling  
the Chapters following.*

**F**or as much as I ought in the Chapters following to teach more particularly all the blows and defences in every ward, (to the end that no man do marvel why I do not perform the same; and do think that the instruction is therefore imperfect) I think good (because my purpose is now to entreat of that only which pertains to true art, to the which the blow of the point, or thrusts, are most agreeable, being more ready and strong than any other) to handle them prin-

E 2

*'The single Rapier*

cipally, and yet not so, but that I will also talk of edgeblows when in my treatise I come to that place where it shall be commodious to strike therewith, placing them near to their wards and defenses, although against all edgeblows this is the best defence, to strike by the right line before the fall of the enemy's sword, for, being delivered in shorter time, it withstandeth their fall and lighting. The order I say, which I will observe, shall be, to lay down every ward, their blows and defences, but principally of the point, than of the edge, if need require.

*The hurt of the high ward at single Rapier.*

**T**he truest, and surest blow that may be given when a man lieth at the high ward, is, the thrust above hand, as well for that it is in the straight line, as also, because it naturally stays itself in the low ward: So that from the beginning to the ending of this blow, there is never any time given to the enemy to enter, by reason, that the point standeth always directly against him. But in the discharging of this blow, a man must remember to draw his left foot near his right foot, and then to increase forwards with the right foot, & deliver it as forcibly as he may, staying himself in the low ward.

True it is, that he may also deliver a right and reversed edgeblow at the head: or else, strike downwards from the wrist of the hand: but because he is not able to turn his wrist in so small a compass, in the discharge of an edgeblow, either high or low,

*The single Rapier.*

but that the point of the sword will be out of the straight line, by the length of a sword, in which (before it return) the enemy has sufficient time to strike: Therefore I would not counsel any man to use them either alone, or both together. But yet between two thrusts, they may be very well used together, by continuing the one after the other (though they be voided) until the last thrust, which doth safely rest itself in the low ward. The use of them is on this manner.

When one having discharged a thrust from the high ward, perceiveth that it doth not hurt, because it was voided by the enemy's sword, he must turn a right edgeblow from the wrist athwart the enemy's head, fetching a compass with his foot behind him toward the right side, to the end the blow may be the longer, which is the longest blow of all others. But if the enemy void this in like case (which is very difficult) then he must suddenly turn the reverse from his elbow increasing therewithal a slope pace with the hinder foot. And it is to be noted, that in delivering a reverse, the slope pace is in a manner always to be used, to the end he may go forth of the straight line, in which (if he should deliver it) he may easily be struck. Having used this pace & reverse, whether it hit or not, the sword in the same instant is something to be drawn or slid: which drawing is profitable in this, that in giving the reverse it doth both cause the weapon to cut, and make the greater blow. Wherefore it is to be understood, that all edgeblows ought so to be delivered, that they may cut: for being directly given without any



### *The single Rapier*

drawing, they cause but a small hurt.

Coming therefore to my purpose, I say: that as soon as he has so drawn his sword, he ought with the straight pace of the right foot, discharge a thrust underneath, being already prepared, which thrust is so strong, both for the aptness thereof and increase of the pace, that it pierces through any impediment withstanding it. And all these blows (beginning from the thrust above hand, till the end of the thrust underneath) being roundly delivered one after another with such swiftness as is required, are in a manner not to be warded. Besides, they have so great increase of pace, that it is not almost possible for the enemy to retire so much backward, as these increase upon him forward.

#### *The defence of the thrust of the high ward at single Rapier.*

**A**ll the fury in striking before spoken of, is utterly frustrated, when, as here it may be seen, a man withstandeth and encountereth the first thrust. For the defence whereof it is needful that he stand at the low ward, and as the thrust cometh, that he encounter it without, with the edge of the sword, and increase a slope pace forward, with the hinder foot at the very same time, by which pace he moveth out of the straight line, and passeth on the right side of the enemy. And he must remember to bear always the point of the sword toward the enemy: So that the enemy in coming forwards, either runneth himself on the sword, which may easily happen, and so much the rather, when he cometh resolutely de-

### *The single Rapier.*

termined to strike, or else if he come not so far forwards that he encountereth the sword, yet he may be safely struck, with the increase of a straight pace: to which pace, having suddenly joined a slope pace, a man must return and increase again though the enemy were struck at the first increase of that pace: For if at the first stroke and increase, the enemy were not hit in the eye, it shall be to small purpose. Therefore as soon as he has used the crooked or slope pace, he must presently increase another straight pace, the which doth so much gather upon the enemy, that if he would strike him in the breast, he may thrust his sword up to the hilts.

Now for the lofty edgeblows, both right and reversed: the rules aforesaid may suffice: To wit, the edgeblow fetcheth a compass. The blow of the point or thrust is the shortest, & in this blow, he that is nearest hitteth soonest: So then he must thrust under any of these edgeblows. And farther, for as much as it is naturally given to every man to defend himself, he may encounter the right edgeblow after another way, and that is, to encounter it with the edge of his sword, and presently, to drive therewithal a thrust at the enemy's face, and to compass his hinder foot, towards the right side behind, to the end, that the thrust may be lengthened and his body thereby covered considering he shall then stand right behind his sword.

This manner of defence, may serve to ward all right blows of the edge, delivered from the high ward, and it is the best way of all other, because it doth not only ward, but also in one and the selfsame time,

### *The single Rapier*

both strike and defend safely.

This manner of thrust is called the reversed thrust. But if one would ward a reverse, he must oppose the edge of his sword without, and therewithal increase a slope pace, & then deliver a thrust with the increase of a straight or right pace. And this may suffice for all that which may be used against a lofty, reversed, edgeblow, as far forth as a man endeavors to oppose himself against the weapon. And this is the very same also which may be used for the warding of the thrust.

#### *The hurt of the broad ward at single Rapier*

**T**he most sure, most true & principle blow that may be used in this ward is the thrust underhand, so that a man draw his left foot near his right foot, and then discharge it with the increase of the said foot, and settle himself in the low ward.

He may also in this ward with the said increase of the right foot, deliver a right edgeblow from the wrist of the hand, and stay himself in the low ward. And perchance he may (although with great danger) bestow also a reverse: yet considering he shall do it out of the straight line, in which only he striketh safely? I do not think it good, that he use either the said reverse, either the said right blow except it be very seldom, & for the same cause, assuring himself in the blow of the point, or thrust, which he shall not give, except it be very commodious, or that he be forced of necessity, considering this thrust doth not only easily and commodiously defend, but

also, at one instant, safely strike, and offend, as shall be showed in the defence of this ward. That therefore which he may safely do, in this ward, is to expect and watch for the enemy's coming.

#### *The Defence of the broad ward at single Rapier.*

**I**f a man would defend himself from the blows of the foresaid broad ward, it is good that he stand against the enemy in the low ward: for while he is so opposite in the same ward, the enemy may neither easily enter, neither commodiously defend himself. So that he which is in the low ward may very easily withstand the downright blow, and the reverse by giving a thrust, for that he shall hit him first, And if he would only oppose his sword, and not strike also therewith all, he must encounter the enemy's sword with the edge of his own; and turning the same edge fetch a reverse, striking at the face of the enemy. And as he so turneth his hand and edge of his sword, it shall be good that he carry his fore foot a half crooked or slope pace towards his right side, staying himself in the broad ward. For defence of the reverse, it is to be marked, when the enemy lifts up the point of the Rapier out of the straight line, because then of force he fetcheth a compass: And whilst he so doth, a man must make a straight pace forwards, and with his left hand take holdfast of the sword hand of the enemy, and incontinently wound him with a thrust underneath already prepared.

Now, the very same defence is to be used against the thrust underneath, which is against the right edge-

F

### *The single Rapier*

blow. Neither is there any other difference between these two defences, but that while the right blow fetcheth his compass, a man may give a thrust and hit home first: For the thrust underneath, must only of necessity be warded, because, coming in the straight line, it ministereth no advantage or time to hit home first.

#### *The hurt of the Low ward at single Rapier.*

A man may in like manner in this ward, as in others, deliver a thrust, a right blow, and a reverse: but the true and principle effect of this ward, is to expect the enemy, as well for that a man beareth himself without wariness, as also, because it is apt and ready to defend all blows either high or low: For being in the middle, it is as easily somewhat lifted up, as something born down: So that when one standeth in this ward, he may not (as for his advantage) be the first that shall give either the down-right blow, or the reverse: for both the one and the other (departing out of the straight line) are deadly, because they give time to the enemy to enter nimbly with a thrust. The thrust therefore, may be only used when one meaneth to strike first, and it is practiced either within, or without, always regarding in either of the ways, so to bear and place his arm, that he have no need (before he thrust) to draw back the same. And if the enemy ward it, by the traverse or cross motion of his Rapier, as many use to do, then he ought to increase a straight pace and lift up his sword hand, holding the point thereof downwards betwixt the enemy's arm and his body, & with the increase

### *The single Rapier*

of a straight pace to deliver a thrust. And this manner of thrust doth easily speed, because it increaseth continually in the straight line in such sort that the enemy can do no other than give back, and especially when it is done without, for then the sword is safe from the traverse motion of the other sword.

#### *The Defence of the low ward at single Rapier.*

Because both the downright blow, and the reverse are very easily defended in this ward, I will not stand to speak of any other than of the thrust, restraining myself thereunto. Which thrust, if at the first it be not withstood, may prove very mortal & deadly. Therefore, when this thrust is given within, it must be beaten inwards with the edge of the Rapier, requiring the same of the hand also inwards, and the compass of the hinder foot, so far towards the right side, as the hand goeth towards the right side, And the enemy shall no sooner have delivered the thrust, and he found the sword, but he ought to turn his hand, and with a reverse to cut the enemy's face, carrying always his fore foot on that side where his hand goeth. If the enemy's thrust come outwards, then it is necessary, that with the turn of his hand he beat it outwards with the edge of his sword entreating in the same instant one slope pace, by means whereof he delivereth his body from hurt. And therewithal (increasing another straight pace, and delivering his thrust already prepared) he doth most safely hurt the enemy.

**H**aving as briefly as I might possibly finished all that which might be said, of true knowledge of single Rapier: it seemeth convenient, that coming from the simple to the compound, I handle those weapons first, which from the Rapier forwards are either most simple or least compound: And especially those which nowadays are most used, and in the which men are most excited, the which weapons are the Rapier & Dagger accompanied together, and are a great increase and furtherance both in striking and defending.

Wherefore, it is first to be considered, that with these and the like weapons, a man may practice that most desired and renowned manner of skirmishing, which is said to strike and defend both in one time, which is thought to be impossible to be done with the single Rapier, and yet in truth it is not so, For there are some kind of blows in the defence of which one may also strike (as in the blows of the edge, down right and reversed) both high and low, and other high blows which here are not spoken of.

Wherefore seeing with these weapons a man may very commodiously, both strike and defend, for that the one is a great help to the other, it is to be remembered, that because these weapons are two, and the one of lesser quantity than the other, to each one be allotted that part both of defending and striking, which it is best able to support. So that to the Dagger, by reason of his shortness, is assigned the left side to defend down to the knee: and to the sword all the right side, & the right

and left side jointly downwards from the knee. Neither may it seem strange that the only Dagger ought to defend all the blows of the left side: for it doth most easily sustain every edgeblow, when it encountereth the sword in the first and second part thereof.

But yet let no man assure himself, to bear any blow, with his only Dagger when he meets with the sword on the third and fourth part thereof, because that part carrieth more force with it than may be sustained with the only Dagger. And yet for all that, no man ought to accustom himself to defend blows with the Rapier and Dagger both together, which manner of defending is now commonly used because men believe, that they stand more assuredly by that means, although in truth it is not so. For the Rapier and Dagger are so bound thereby, that they may not strike before they be recovered, and therein are spent two times, under the which a man may be struck when he that striketh continuing by the straight line, increaseth forwards, perceiving his enemy to be occupied and troubled in defending of himself. And albeit this is not seen to come to pass many times, yet that is because the advantage is not known, or being known, men either are not ready to execute it, either stand greatly in fear to do it.

Therefore leaving aside this manner of defence, let each man use to oppose, one only weapon against the enemy's sword, keeping the other free, that he may be able to strike at his pleasure.

And it is diligently to be noted, that not only the blows of the sword, but also of any other weapon

### *The Rapier and Dagger.*

be it never so great, may with the only Dagger be sustained and defended, when a man doth boldly encounter it towards the hand.

It is therefore to be known, that in the handling of these two weapons one may with less danger give a blow with the edge than at the single Rapier: For albeit the point of the Rapier be moved out of the straight line: yet for all that there is not free power given to the enemy to strike, considering there is another weapon contrariwise prepared to defend: but this doth not so fall out at the single Rapier, which bearing itself far off when it striketh with the edge, doth present & give the means to the enemy to hit home first. And yet for all that, I would counsel no man, either in this or in any other sort of weapon to accustom himself to give blows with the edge: for that he may under them be most easily struck by a thrust.

### *Of the Wards.*

**I**n the handling of these weapons, men use to frame many wards, all which, because many of them carry no reason, for that they are either out of the straight line, either under them a man may easily be struck, I will cast aside as impertinent to my purpose, & restrain myself unto those three with which a man may safely strike & defend, whereunto all the rest may be reduced.

### *How to defend with the Dagger.*

**I** have said elsewhere that the left side of the person is that part which the dagger ought to defend, that is

### *The Rapier and Dagger.*

to say, from the knee upwards: the lower parts together with the right side ought wholly to be warded with the sword.

Concerning the dagger, that which is to be done therewith, it is to be noted, that for great advantage, it would be held before with the arm stretched forth & the point respecting the enemy, which although it be far from him, yet in that it hath a point, it giveth him occasion to bethink himself.

Now whether a man ought to hold his dagger with the edge or flat towards the enemy, it may be left to the judgment of him that handleth it, so to use it, as shall be most for his advantage. I have seen some, who bear it with the edge towards the enemy, alleging this to be their advantage, that as they encounter the enemy's sword (which cometh with the edge or point) in the first and second part thereof, & therewithal do increase a pace forwards, of force the hand turneth and placeth the edge of the Dagger there where the flat was first: So that they are to drive the enemy's sword far from them without any great trouble, because each little motion in the first part of the sword causeth very great variety in the point, from whence principally proceedeth the hurt. In which case, it shall be very profitable to have a good large Dagger.

There be othersome, whom it pleases to carry their Dagger with the flat towards the enemy, using for their defence, not only the Dagger, but also the guards thereof with the which (they say) they take holdfast of the enemy's sword: and to the end they may do it the more easily, they have daggers of pur-

*The Rapier and Dagger.*

pose, which beside their ordinary hilts, have also two long starts of Iron, four fingers length, and are distant from the dagger the thickness of a bow-string, into which distance, when it chanceth the enemy's sword to be driven, they suddenly strain and hold fast the sword, the which may come to pass, but I hold it for a thing rather to be imagined than practiced, the case so standing, that in the heat of fight, where disdain bickers with fear, little doth a man discern whether the sword be in that straight or no. And when he is to premeditate and mark, endeavoring and striving in his lively judgment, he must advise himself to perform it with the exquisite knowledge and perfect discerning of the enemy's motions, his nearness and farness, and to resolve himself to strike by the shortest way that may be: for therehence [*from there*] springeth the victory.

Let every man therefore hold his dagger with the edge or flat towards the enemy, as it shall most advantage him, or as he has been most accustomed. True it is, that by holding the edge towards the enemy there is this advantage gotten, that with the dagger he may strike with the edge, which he may not do the other way. But let every man hold it as he will, yet he ought to carry his arm stretched out before him, with the point in manner aforesaid, to the end he may be able to find the enemy's sword a great deal before it hitteth his person.

Besides this, he ought to observe for an infallible rule, that when the point or edge cometh on the left side, he must beat it from that side with the dagger. And in like sort defending himself with the

*The Rapier and Dagger.*

sword, to drive it from the right side, for doing otherwise: that is, if he force the blows given on the left side outwards on the right side (forasmuch as the enemy's sword has by that means two motions, the one crossing, which is already given, the other straight which the enemy giveth it, continuing the one with the other) it may be, that in the straight motion, it may hit the person, before that (by the thwart or crossing motion) it be driven quite outwards. Therefore all blows shall be beaten outwards toward that side or part of the body which is least to the end it may the sooner avoid danger. And those blows that come on the right side must be beaten towards the right side: and those on the left side must in like manner be voided from the same side.

Now, as concerning the fashion of the Dagger, thus much is to be said: that it would be strong, able to bear and encounter the blows of the sword: indifferently long, that it may be quickly drawn out of the sheath somewhat short: and those that are of the middle size would be chosen.

*The offence of the high ward  
at Rapier and Dagger.*

**A**s in handling the single Rapier, so likewise in this, it shall not be amiss to begin with the high ward, which in managing these two weapons may be framed after two sorts. The one with the right foot before, which I will call the first: and the other with the same foot behind, which I will term the second. This second requires a

*The Rapier and Dagger.*



greater time, because the point of the sword is farther off from the enemy. The first (being more near) with the only increase of the foot forwards striketh more readily, yet not more forcible than the second, which, when it striketh with the increase of a straight pace, joins to the force of the arm & hand, the strength of the whole body.

Beginning then with the first, as with that which each man doth most easily find; I say, he ought if he will keep himself within the bounds of true art, to thrust only with the increase of the foot forwards, settling himself in the low ward.

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In the second way, which is framed with the right foot behind, the sword aloft, and the dagger before, & born as aforesaid, he ought in like sort discharge a thrust as forcibly as he may, with the increase of a straight pace, staying himself in the low ward. Neither ought any man in the handling of these weapons to assure himself to deliver edgeblows, because he knows that there is another weapon which defendeth: For he that defendeth has the selfsame advantage, to wit, to be able with one weapon (and happily the weaker,) to defend himself and strike with the stronger. The which stroke is painfully warded by him, who has already bestowed all his force and power, in delivering the said edgeblow, by means whereof, because there remaineth in him small power to withstand any great encounter, let him provide to thrust only.

Of all, or of the greater part of the edgeblows, as well of striking as defending, I will reason at large in the Treatise of Deceit.

*Of the defence of high ward at  
Rapier and Dagger.*

To speak of the manner how to withstand the blows of the edge, having already said that all such blows may easily be warded by giving a thrust, I omit as superfluous. But for the defences of both sides of the body: I say, it is great vantage, to stand at the low ward, with the right foot forwards, by which manner of standing, the right side is put forth toward the enemy,

*The Rapier and Dagger.*

whereunto he will direct all his thrusts: and those may be encountered after three sorts, that is to say: with the Dagger only: with the Sword only: and with both joined together. But in each of them, a man must remember to increase a slope pace, whereby that part of the body which was to be struck is voided out of the straight line.

When one wards with his Dagger only, he shall increase a pace, and bear his arm forwards, and having found the enemy's sword, he shall (with the increase of a straight pace) strike him with a thrust underneath, already prepared.

When he wards with his sword only, it is requisite, that making a slope pace, he lift up his sword, and bear it outwards, or else, as soon as he has found the enemy's sword, that with his dagger he strike at the temples of his enemy's head, staying his sword with his own: or else instead of striking with the Dagger, therewith to stay the enemy's sword, & with it, (increasing another straight pace) to deliver a thrust: but it is very commodious to strike with the Dagger.

The third way: As soon as he has made the slope pace, and found the enemy's sword, he ought to stay it with his Dagger, and therewithal, withdrawing his own sword, to discharge a thrust underneath with the increase of a straight pace.

*The hurt of the broad ward at Rapier  
and Dagger.*

**I**n each weapon and ward, I have laid down as a general precept, that no man ought, (either for

the procuring of any advantage, either for striking the enemy more readily) deliver blows of the edge, And in like sort, I have said, that easily and with small danger, one may be struck under any such blow: which precepts, as in each time and place, they ought to be observed: so in this ward principally they may not be forgotten. For a man may not without great discommodity and loss of time, strike with any edgeblow, as he standeth at this ward.

It rests therefore, that the thrust be only used, which ought to be delivered with the increase of the foot forwards, always regarding before it be given, (if it be possible) to beat away the point of the enemy's sword with the Dagger.

*The defence of the broad ward at Rapier and Dagger.*

**T**his thrust also as well as the other may be warded after three sorts, to wit: with the Dagger only, with the sword only, and with both joined together. But for a man's defence in any of these ways, it is good to stand at the low ward. And when he wards with the dagger only, he must make a slope pace, and finding the enemy's sword, with his said dagger, discharge a thrust underneath with the increase of a straight pace.

And when he wards with the sword only (which is the best of any other, both to strike the enemy, and defend himself) he must oppose the edge of his sword against the enemy's, and drive a thrust at his face, fetching a compass with his hinder foot, both for the lengthening of the thrust, and assuring of



*The Rapier and Dagger.*

himself.

It is possible to withstand the thrust with the sword and dagger joined together: but it is so commodious and so ridiculous a way, that I leave to speak thereof, as of a way nothing safe to be practiced.

*The hurt of the low ward at Rapier and Dagger.*

**I**n each ward, when one standeth bearing the point of the sword towards the enemy, it doth much disadvantage him to strike with the edge. And if in any sort it be lawful so to do, it is, when he standeth at the low ward: For it is commodious, and there is spent but little time in the bestowing of an edgeblow between thrusts. Or, the rather to try the enemy, there may be delivered an edgeblow from the wrist of the hand, in the which as there is spent little time, so the point is carried but a little out of the straight line, so that the enemy may very hardly enter to strike under either of these blows. But it is better, not to use them, resolving rather to discharge thrust after thrust, than any edgeblow.

This ward may (as the high ward) be framed after two sorts, to wit: with the right foot behind, and the same foot before: but that with the right foot behind, is used rather to expel the enemy than to strike first. For although it carries great force by reason that the sword is far off from hurting and before it hitteth home, it spends much time, yet the hurt thereof may easily be warded, either with the weapon, or by retiring a pace. I will speak of that

*The Rapier and Dagger.*

only which is framed with the right foot before. And in this, one may strike two ways, to wit: either within or without: By (Within) I understand, when his sword is born between the enemy's sword & dagger. By (Without) I mean, when any one of them is born in the middle against the other.

When one finds himself within, at the half of the enemy's sword, the point whereof, is directed to strike at the right side, he must very swiftly increase a slope pace, and in a manner straight, to the end he may approach the nearer his enemy, and therewithal suddenly barring the enemy's sword in the middle with his own sword and dagger, increase a straight pace, and deliver a thrust.

This may be done after another plainer way, and that is: when he standeth at the half sword, to beat the enemy's sword's point out of the straight line on that side which shall be most commodious, and in that line increasing his foot forwards to drive a forcible thrust, at the enemy's face or breast.

But standing without, he may (with the increase of his foot forwards) give a thrust at the face, which the enemy of necessity must defend with his sword: but therein the sword and the point thereof is commonly carried out of the straight line, in which case he may (with the increase of a slope pace) turn a reverse at the legs, and then presently something withdrawing his sword, deliver a thrust underneath with the increase of a straight pace.

He may also after a second manner, give a right edgeblow from the wrist, as short and strong as is possible, not so much pretending to strike as to find the

*The Rapier and Dagger.*

enemy's sword: And it being suddenly found he must with the increase of a slope or crooked pace, lift up his hand and drive a thrust downwards, with the increase of a straight pace.

After a third sort also, he may strike, and that is to deliver the foresaid blow from the wrist, and having met with the enemy's sword, to make presently a slope pace, and stay the sword with his dagger, and then nimbly recovering his own sword, to thrust underneath with the increase of a straight pace.

These be sufficient, concerning that which may be done in this ward with the sword both within and without, at least, for so much as may be done by true art.

*The defence of the low ward at Rapier & Dagger.*

**A**lthough in the defence of blows in each ward, there is great consideration & heed to be taken: yet in this especially is required a far more excellent judgment and readiness in action. For this ward doth oppose itself against all others. And the greater part of blows which are of importance, proceed from this ward.

Besides, every man doth naturally more accustom himself to stay and repose himself in it, than in any other. Neither is it (as I believe) for any other cause, than that he knows, by so bearing himself, he may easily both strike and defend. And because in this ward, as I have before said, in the hurt or offence thereof, it is more commodious to strike with the edge than in any other ward; albeit, it is not there given for counsel to be good to use it. But yet be-

*The Rapier and Dagger.*

cause it may easily happen, there shall be here laid down some defence for it: calling this principle before any other to remembrance, (He that is nearest, hitteth soonest,) to the end, that knowing what way either sword makes, each man may resolve himself to deliver a thrust under an edgeblow, by the which is prevented the fall of the said blow.

But because none but such as are endued with deep judgment, great activity, and stout courage, do or may fairly put this in practice: And to the end also that those, who accustom to defend every blow, performing that in two times which might as well be done in one, may rest satisfied: I will lay down the defence of the edgeblow.

Therefore, whensoever edgeblows are given, they are either right or reversed, high or low.

Against the right high blow, either the only dagger is to be opposed, either the sword and Dagger both together. When the only dagger is used, then a straight pace must be increased, & the dagger hand lifted up to encounter the enemy's sword in the weakest part thereof, & being suddenly found a straight pace is to be increased, and a thrust underneath (already prepared) to be discharged. But if the sword and dagger be both together opposed, they both must be lifted up, and as soon as the blow is encountered, the enemy's face is to be cut by discharging a reverse, with the only turn of the hand, resting and staying itself in the broad ward.

The right blow, given beneath, or below, must be warded after no other manner, than by driving a thrust at the enemy's thigh, which thrust is to this pur-

### *The Rapier and Dagger.*

pose, that it hitteth home safely under that blow, and farther is a let, or bar, to the enemy's sword, so that it may not light on the legs, considering that in the discharge of the said thrust, the hinder foot must necessarily go compassing towards the right side behind.

Reverses also, are either high or low. If high: they may be warded with the dagger only, therewithal discharging a thrust underneath, with the increase of a straight pace, as soon as the dagger has met with the enemy's sword. Either, they may be warded with the sword only increasing a straight pace with the left foot, therewithal discharging a thrust (already lifted up in the ward) with the increase of a straight pace of the right leg. And this manner of warding, is more according to art, because it has been said, That all blows on the left side, are to be warded with the dagger only.

The reverse blow would be warded with giving a thrust which safely hitteth, and hinders the sword to light on the legs. This blow also, may be warded after other and divers manners, which shall be declared in the treatise of Deceit: for this is not their proper place.

There is great regard to be taken in warding of thrusts, to wit: to bear the body out of the straight line, because this is the safest way that may be found to void them, because it very difficult to meet with them, when they come barred and closed in, and are forcibly discharged. For when a thrust cometh within (at the very time that the enemy striketh) he ought to increase a slope pace, ensuring himself of the

### *The Rapier and Cloak.*

enemy's sword with his dagger, and then to discharge a thrust with the increase of a straight pace.

The thrust without is warded after the first manner, to wit, when the enemy striketh, to increase a slope pace (whereby the body voids danger) & to give a thrust with the increase of a straight pace. In this order one may ward himself from other ways of striking.

In like case, when the enemy (only to try and provoke) doth deliver an edgeblow from the wrist of the hand: let every man be advised, as soon as the blow is delivered, to increase a slope pace, and deliver a thrust with the increase of a straight pace, before the enemy (after his blow given) do determine to discharge any more. This may suffice, for the handling of the Rapier and Dagger truly, with advantage.

### *The Rapier and Cloak.*

**T**hat I may continue in the weapons which are most usual and most commonly worn: After the Dagger, I come to the Cloak:

The use whereof was first found out by chance and after reduced into art. Neither was this for any other cause, than for that nature doth not only delight to invent things, but also to preserve them being invented. And that she may the better do it, she takes for her help all those things that are commodious for her. Wherefore, as men in divers accidents have casually proved, that the Cloak helps greatly (for as much as they are to wear it

daily) they have devised how they may behave themselves in all that, in which the Cloak may serve their turn. Which accidents, because they are infinite, & do not generally serve for our purpose, I will restrain myself and speak of those only which appertain to this art, the which are such and so effectual, that they may greatly help to the obtaining of safe victory, if they happen to be placed in such a man as knows how to use and handle them. And for that in true art it doth little prevail, the use thereof being in a manner altogether deceitful, I was resolved to put over all this to the treatise of Deceit, as unto his proper place. Notwithstanding, to the end it may not seem strange to any man, to read nothing of the Cloak in all the handling of true Art, I am minded to lay down a certain few blows in the accustomed wards, referring the more abundant handling thereof unto the treatise of Deceit.

*The manner how to handle the Cloak.*

**A**s the Cloak in this art, has in it three things to be considered, to wit length, largeness, and flexibility: so it is to be weighed how far each of these will stretch, to serve the turn. Of which three, one doth properly belong unto it, and that is flexibility, which may neither be increased nor diminished: The other two, may receive alteration. But yet it is at any hand to be provided, that these two also be not diminished. For the Cloak is no strong thing, which of itself may withstand the blows of the weapon, being directly opposed against them.

And therefore he shall prove himself but a fool, who trusting to the Cloth wrapped about his arms, doth encounter any right edgeblow therewith. For seeing the Cloak is not flexible in that part (which flexibility is his only strength) little prevails either length or largeness, wrapped about a solid substance. But being opposite in that part thereof, where it has length, largeness and flexibility (which is from the arm downwards) it is available: for all three being joined together will ward any edgeblow: which manner of warding should not be so sure, if the cloak had only length and flexibility: For having behind it little air, which is the thing that doth strengthen it, it may easily be beaten too, and cut, by any great blow. Therefore, if man have so much leisure, he ought to wrap his Cloak once or twice about his arm, taking it by the Cape or collar, and folding his arm therein up to the elbow and therewithal to ward all edgeblows from the flank thereof downwards, as well on the right side, as on the left side, always remembering to carry his foot differing from his arm, for the avoiding of danger that may rise by bearing his leg on the selfsame side, near his cloak knowing the Cloak wards not when there is any hard substance behind it.

Thrusts also themselves, may be given without, if with the Cloak, or with the hand in the Cloak, the enemy's sword be beaten off, one handful within the point thereof. For the edge having but small power in that case, is not liable in so little time, to cut the hand. The blows also, as well. of the point, as of the edge, from the flank upwards, ought to be

### *The Rapier and Cloak.*

warded with the sword; For to lift the arm so high being burdened with the weight of the Cloak, which naturally draws downwards, as it is a violent thing it is also perilous, least the arm be placed instead of the Cloak and so rest wounded, or left the arm or Cloak be placed before the eyes, which by that means remain blinded.

#### *An advertisement concerning the warding and wrapping of the Cloak.*

**T**here are two ways (in these days) to wrap the Cloak, the one is, when one having leisure takes the Cloak by the cape or collar, and so folds it once or twice about his arm: The other is, as often times it falls out, when letting the Cloak fall down from the shoulder, it is happily taken by one side, & so is turned once or twice about the arm.

Now as concerning striking, a man ought in the handling of these weapons as he would strike, first to increase and carry the one foot near to the other, and then farther to increase a half, not a whole pace, as in other weapons: For at these weapons, it is dangerous least (making a whole pace) he entangle his foot or feet in the Cloak and fall down therewith. And this must be taken heed of, in the first and second folding, but principally in the second, because in it the Cloak is longer, and therefore doth more easily touch the earth & entangle his feet: In the first fold, although the cloak touch not the earth, because the arm doth orderly bear it, yet by reason of weariness, the arm falls & causeth the

foresaid effect.

### *The Rapier and Cloak.*



#### *The hurt of the high ward at Rapier and Cloak.*

**I**n these manner of weapons, as in others, I will frame three wards: The first by the foresaid reasons, shall be the high ward, which in these kind of weapons more than in any other deserve the name of a ward. For the Rapier (something bending) wards as far as the cloak hand, and the cloak hand down to the middle leg: so that in this ward a man is warded from the top of the head down to the foot.

### *The Rapier and Cloak.*

Therefore standing at this ward, whether it be with the right foot before or behind, he may deliver a thrust with the increase of a half pace forwards, staying himself in the low ward.

The right edgeblow ought to be delivered from the wrist without any motion of the feet, resting in the low ward: but in delivering of the reverse, it is necessary to fetch a whole pace, and in a manner straight. If the enemy ward it with his sword, then the encounter of the enemy's sword, must be stayed suddenly with the Cloak-hand in the first part thereof, and a thrust be delivered underneath, with the increase of a straight pace.

#### *The defence of the thrust, right and reversed blows of the high ward at Rapier And Cloak.*

**F**or the better avoiding of the hurts which proceed from the high ward: it is necessary to stand at the low ward, in the which the thrust is to be warded four manner of ways, to wit: either with the single sword within and without, either with the single Cloak within and without. If with the single sword within, it is requisite to fetch a compass with the foot backwards on the right side. In like case to turn the body the same way, to the intent, to carry it out of the straight line (in which the blow cometh) and to drive a reversed thrust at the face, the which thrust in such order delivered is the longest that is, and such a one, as thereby the hurt is not only voided, but also at the selfsame time, the enemy is struck in the face. If it chance, that the sword be encountered without

### *The Rapier and Cloak.*

then it is not only profitable but also necessary, to step forwards and with the Cloak to encounter the enemy's sword in the first part thereof. And recovering his own sword, to discharge a thrust underneath with the increase of the right foot. And although it be laid down for a rule not to use a whole pace in handling of the Cloak, this ought to be understood in striking, in the which (whilst one endeavors to strike with his sword) it may be forgetting the Cloak, his arm may fall, by means whereof he may stumble against it: but in warding, it doth not so happen. For nature being careful to defend herself (at every little danger) lifts up both her arms, yea, although they be oppressed with weight and burden.

Wherefore it is not to be feared, that in warding this thrust, the hand will be drawn down by the weight of the Cloak.

The same wards and defences may be used with the single Cloak, in the which, one must likewise strike, with the increase of the right foot. This manner of warding is not very sure, and therefore it requires great activity and deep judgment, considering he ought to bear his Cloak and arm stretched out before him, & to mark when the enemy's sword's point shall pass within the Cloak hand one handful or little more: and not to suffer it to pass farther, but to beat it off, and increasing to discharge a thrust underneath, with the increase of a pace with the right foot. But as I have said, this manner of warding has little certainty and great peril in it, and yet it striketh well, if it be done in short time.

*The Rapier and Cloak.*

The right edgeblow may in like manner be warded with the single sword or cloak: but when it cometh aloft, it shall not be commodious to encounter it with the single cloak; for by that means the eyes blind themselves. How much this imports, let others judge. But, when the said right blow cometh in a manner low, so that it may well be warded, keeping the enemy in sight, then the cloak is to be opposed, with the increase of the left pace, & presently thereupon, a thrust to be discharged, with the increase of a right pace,

When one opposes the single sword against the right blow, he must drive a thrust at the face, & fetch a compass with his hinder foot, cutting the face with the said thrust and stay himself in the broad ward. The selfsame must be done, when he defendeth himself with both together, to wit, with the sword and cloak,

Against the reversed blow the selfsame manner is used in warding to wit, either with the one, or with the other, either with both joined together.

With the cloak, by the increase of a pace, and by encountering the enemy's sword, as far forwards as is possible, that thereby it may be done the more commodiously, delivering a thrust therewithal underneath, with the increase of a pace of the right foot.

With the single Rapier, the same defence may suffice, which is laid down in the treatise of the single Rapier, and that is, to discharge a thrust at the enemy's thigh, the which withstandeth the full of the reversed blow.

Now, if one would defend himself with both

*The Rapier and Cloak.*

these weapons joined together, he must increase a pace with the right foot, & staying the enemy's sword with his cloak, recover his own sword nimbly, and then deliver a thrust with the increase of a pace of the right foot.

*The hurt of the broad ward, at Rapier and Cloak.*

**I**n this ward, as well as in others, a man may both thrust and strike, yet diversely: For he may not discharge a right edgeblow beneath. And the reverse is manifestly dangerous: So that, when he is to deliver it, he ought to perform it in this order.

First, he shall drive a thrust, fetching a compass with his hinder foot that by that means it may reach the farther, then suddenly (without moving of himself) he shall discharge a right edgeblow, from the wrist, after the which presently, the reverse must follow, with the increase of a pace of the right foot and further, must follow on with the thrust already prepared, and increase the like pace.

*The defence of the broad ward, at Rapier and Cloak.*

**T**o him that will safely ward himself from the hurt of the broad ward, it is requisite, that he stand at the low ward. And when the thrust underneath hand cometh, he shall thrust at the face, fetching a compass with his hinder foot towards the right side, with which kind of thrust, it doth lightly happen that the enemy is hit in the face:

*The Rapier and Cloak.*

but if it fail, yet for all that, the enemy obtaineth not his purpose, in the discharge of the thrust of the broad ward: For by delivering the thrust underneath, and compassing of the hinder foot, the body is carried out of the straight line: So that, as soon as the thrust is delivered at the face, and the enemy not struck therewith, but passes beyond his head, the reverse is to be turned at the face, and the foot to be plucked back, settling in the broad ward. To ward the right and reversed blows, there is a thrust to be given at the thighs or some other place that may most hinder them, in the very same time that such blows are in their circle or compass. Although I do not believe that there is any man so foolish, that (in this ward) will deliver a reverse only.

*Of the hurt of the low ward, at Rapier and Cloak.*

**T**his ward is so straight and perilous, that no man ought to assure himself to deliver an edgeblow any manner of way. For under any of them he may be easily struck, and each of them may easily be warded with the Cloak. Therefore, he must diligently take heed, that he thrust only, the which must never be discharged before the enemy's sword be found, and then as far forwards as is possible. So then finding it, he may thrust both within and without. Neither is there in this thrust any other advantage to be gotten, than to steal a half pace unawares of the enemy, which may be done very commodiously, considering the cloak occupies the enemy's sight, And having drawn this

*The Rapier and Cloak.*

half pace, and found the enemy's sword, he must increase another half pace forwards, and strike him, costing and forcing the enemy's sword, on that side where it may do no hurt. And this may be used both within and without: But he whom it pleases, and who doubts not to be entangled in the Cloak, may (finding himself within) carry his left foot making a pace therewith, and between his cloak & his sword, close the enemy's sword, and deliver a thrust with the increase of a pace of the right foot: And finding the enemy's sword without, he may use the selfsame increase and thrust. But if he find not the enemy's sword, he may deliver a little edgeblow from the wrist of the hand, in such sort, that the enemy have no leisure to enter in: And having found the Sword, to discharge a right or straight thrust, or else not voiding the enemy's sword by the increase of a left pace, to drive a thrust from aloft downwards, lifting up the fist somewhat high, and delivering it with the increase of a pace of the right foot.

*Of the defence of the low Ward  
at Rapier and Cloak.*

**T**o the end a man may ward himself from all the thrusts reckoned in the hurts of this ward, he neither ought, neither happily may do any other thing than void his body from the straight line, wherein the enemy purposeth to strike, making a left pace forwards, somewhat thwarting or crossing and striking the enemy safely. The which doth not so chance, when one defendeth himself



*The Sword and Buckler.*

either with the single Cloak or single Rapier: For whilst he assayeth to defend himself, he cannot strike. And if the enemy do first move, and strike straight, in the which, his sword is not carried much outwards (and it is hardly done,) I say, the enemy may by stealing of half paces, discharge a thrust perforce. And therefore he must take heed, that (as the enemy moveth) he increase a slope pace (by that means voiding the hurt) then athwart or crossing pace next, with the increase of a straight pace of the right foot, to strike the enemy with a thrust underneath.

This may suffice, for the handling of these weapons as much as appertaineth to sure play. All that which remains is reserved to the treatise of deceit, in which place shall be seen many handlings of the cloak no less profitable than pleasant.

*Of the Sword and Buckler.*

**F**or as much as the Buckler is a weapon very commodious & much used, it is reason that I handle it next after the Cloak. For my purpose is, to reason of those weapons first which men do most ordinarily use, than of those that are extraordinary and less accustomed, discoursing upon each of them, as much as is requisite when I come unto them. Therefore I will first consider of the Buckler, therewith proceeding orderly.

First his form, as much as appertains to this art. Next the manner how to use it, giving every man to understand that the Buckler and other weapons (which are said to be weapons only of warding)

*The Sword and Buckler.*

may also be of striking, as I will declare in his proper place.

*Of the Form of the Buckler.*

**A**s the form of the Buckler is round and small, and ought to be a shield & safeguard of the whole body, which is far greater than it: So it is to be understood how it may accomplish the same, being a matter in a manner impossible.

Let every one therefore know, that the little Buckler is not equal in bigness to the body simply, but after a certain sort or manner, from which springs this commodity, that he which understandeth it, shall be resolved of the manner how to bear and handle it, and shall know that in it, which that not only advantage him in the use thereof, but also of many other weapons.

It is to be understood that the Buckler beareth the selfsame respect to the body, which the little prick or fight, on the top of the Harquebus artillery or such like beareth to the object which they respect and behold. For when an Harquebusier or Gunner, dischargeth happily against a Pigeon or Tower, if they behold and find that the Prick striketh the object, although that prick or fight be very little, and of a thousand parts one: yet I say, the said prick of the Harquebus shall cover the whole Pigeon, and that of the Artillery in a manner the whole Tower: The effect proceeding of no other thing than of the distance. And it is in this manner. The eye beholding directly through the straight sight, as soon as it arrives at the object, and may not pass through, tears

### *The Sword and Buckler.*

it, and sendeth through a line sidewise, spreading itself like unto the two sides of a Triangle, the which overthroweth the foundation of that thing which it striketh: The which foundation, the instrument striketh with which the discharge was made. And if it work otherwise, that cometh either of the defect of the instrument, or of that it was not firm.

Wherefore, applying this example to our purpose I say, that the enemy's sword is as the line of the eyesight, The Buckler, even as the little prick or fight in the Harquebus, the body of him that holds the Buckler, as the object unto the which the stroke is directed: And so much the rather the Buckler shall be the more like this prick or sight, and have power to cover the whole body, by how much it shall be the further off from the thing that is to cover.

As concerning his greatness, standing still on the form of the Buckler, by how much the greater it is, by so much the better it voideth the blows. But it is to be regarded, that it hinder not the eyesight, or at least as little as is possible. Besides this, there is required, that about the middle thereof, there be a little strong circle of Iron, well nailed and hollowed from the Buckler, so that between that circle & the Buckler the Sword may enter, by means whereof, a man may either take holdfast of the sword, or break a piece of the point. But this is done rather by chance than that any rule may be given how a man should so take hold and break it, for the sword cometh not with such slowness, and in such quantity of time, as is requisite in that behalf.

It shall be also very profitable, that in the midst of

### *The Sword and Buckler.*

the Buckler, there be a sharp point or start of Iron, to the end the enemy may be struck therewith when occasion serves.

#### *The manner how to handle the Buckler.*

**I**f a man would, that the Buckler work the said effect, to wit: that it may be able with his smallness to cover the whole body, he must hold and bear it in his fist, as far off from the body as the arm may possibly stretch forth, moving always the arm & buckler together, as one entire and solid thing, having no bending, or as if the arm were united to the buckler, turning continually all the flat thereof towards the enemy. From which kind of holding proceed all these commodities following.

1 The first is, that the arm (standing directly behind the Buckler) is wholly covered, neither may be struck by any manner of thing which is before it.

2 The second, that all edgeblows are of force encountered in the first and second part thereof, where they carry least force: neither can it fall out otherwise, if the enemy would (in manner as he ought) strike either at the head or body. For if the enemy would strike them, it is necessary, that his sword come within the buckler so much as the arm is long: for otherwise it shall never hit home. And in this case he may well ward each great blow, and therewithal easily strike, and that in short time.

3 The third commodity is, that all thrusts are most easily warded: for the Buckler being round,

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### *The Sword and Buckler.*

with the directly flat opposite against the enemy, warding all the body, the enemy will not resolve himself to give a thrust but only against those parts which are so well covered by the Buckler, as, the head, the thighs, of some part of the body, being found discovered by ill bearing of the Buckler. And seeing that these thrusts, having to hit home, ought to enter so far in, as is from the buckler to the body & more (and that it is the length of an arm) they may easily and without doubt (making less motion, and therefore in little time) be driven outwards by the Buckler before they come to the body.

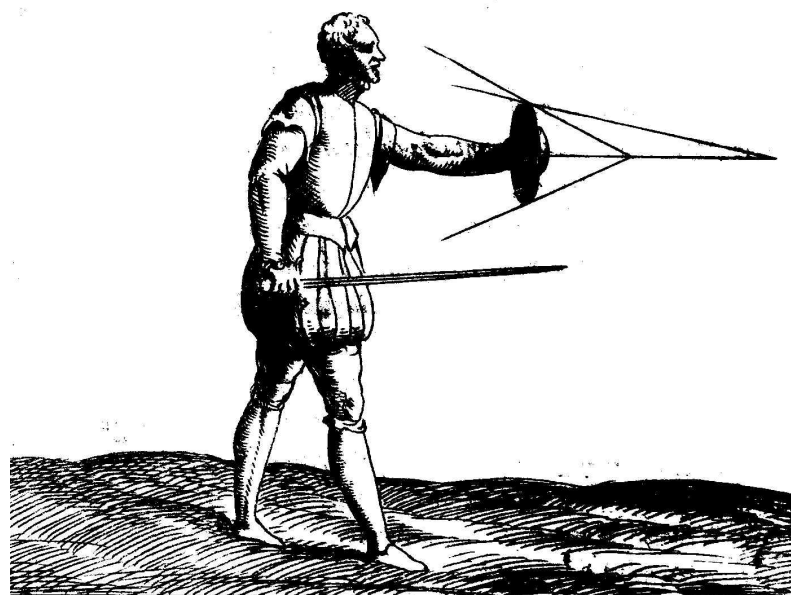
There are many other commodities to be gathered by so holding of the buckler which at this present are not to be recited

Wherefore being to finish this Chapter, I say, that the Buckler ought not to defend, but only down to the knee and less. And reason would that it should defend no farther than the arm can stretch itself, that is to the middle thigh. In the act of fighting, a man standeth always somewhat bowing, therefore a little more is allowed. The rest of the body downwards must be warded with the Sword only.

#### *Of the hurt of the high ward at Sword or Buckler.*

**B**ecause it is a very easy matter to ward both the right and reversed blows of the edge: And for that a man may easily strike under them, I will not lay down either for the one or the other their striking or defending but only talk of the thrust. I say, the thrust above may be

### *The Sword and Buckler.*



delivered in two sorts, the one with the right foot behind, the other with the right foot before.

When the thrust is discharged that carries the right foot behind, there must (in delivery thereof) be increased a straight pace of the right foot. And it must be driven & forced with all that strength which it requireth, and that is very great, then settling in the low ward.

When one would deliver a thrust with the right foot before, he must remember in any case, first (unawares of the enemy) to steal a half pace, that is to say: to draw the hinder foot near the fore foot, & then to cast a thrust with the increase of a half pace

*The Sword and Buckler.*

forwards, settling himself after the delivery thereof in the low ward.

*Of the defence of the high ward at Sword & Buckler.*

**A**s a man standeth at the low ward he may easily defend both those lofty thrusts. When they come, he standing at the said ward, it shall be best to drive them outwards, with the increase of a left pace, and with his sword and buckler to stay the enemy's sword. And because this left pace is a great increase: and likewise the enemy, driving his thrusts, cometh with great force, it may easily come to pass that both may approach so near one to the other, that he may with his buckler give the enemy, the *Mostaccióne* [*a blow to the face*], in the face, but that must be done when fit occasion is offered, and then further recovering his own sword to discharge a thrust underneath with the increase of a pace of the right foot.

*Of the hurt of the broad ward, at  
Sword and Buckler.*

**I**f a man would step forward, and strike as he standeth in the broad ward, it is not lawful for him to use any other than the thrust, considering the right & reversed blows may not be delivered without great peril and danger. For in the site or placing of this ward, the sword is far off from the body. And as he moveth to fetch a right or reversed edgeblow his sword of force will be much farther: So that it may not be done without great danger. Therefore he shall use the thrust only: in forcing and delivery whereof,

*The Sword and Buckler.*

he shall proceed first to carry his hinder foot a half pace forwards, and then to drive it on with the increase of another half pace of the right foot, staying himself in the broad ward.

*The defence of the broad ward at Sword and Buckler.*

**A**gainst the thrust of the broad ward, the Buckler is to be opposed, standing at the low ward. And when the enemy cometh resolutely to thrust, then without warding it at all, he shall drive a thrust at the face, carrying the hinder foot in a compass towards the right side as well to lengthen the thrust, as also to carry himself out of the straight line, in the which the enemy cometh resolved to strike, who, by this manner of thrust is easily hurt.

*The hurt of the low ward at Sword and Buckler.*

**A**s this low ward is framed two manner of ways, that is to say, with the right foot before & behind: So likewise a man may strike therein after two sorts, Standing with the right foot behind (leaving aside, the blows of the edge, being to small purpose) he shall deliver a thrust with the increase of a pace of the right foot, between the enemy's sword and buckler, or else, if it be more commodious without the sword and buckler, settling in the low ward, with the right foot before, in which ward, a man may strike two manner of ways, within and without: Finding himself without having first met the enemy's sword with his own, he shall increase a left pace, not to the intent to avoid himself from the enemy's sword, but shall with his

*The Sword and Buckler.*

buckler also, stay the enemy's sword, and forasmuch as he did not at the first deliver the said thrust, he shall then continue and force it on directly with the increase of a pace of the right foot. Finding himself within, the same thrust is to be used but more strongly. For, with the increase of a pace, leaving his buckler or the enemy's sword, he shuts it in between his own sword & the buckler: and keeping it in that straight, (whereby he is sure the enemy can deliver no edgeblow because it may not move neither upwards nor downwards, neither forwards, but is then without the body,) he shall continue on & resolutely deliver this manner of thrust, with the increase of a pace of the right foot.

*The defence of the low ward, at Sword & Buckler.*

**F**or the defence of all these thrusts, it is necessary that he stand at the low ward, & standing thereat, while the thrust cometh which is delivered with the right foot behind, he shall do no other, than in the selfsame time, deliver a thrust at the thigh or breast, turning the hilt of his sword against the enemy's sword, & compassing his hinder foot, withal bearing his body out of the straight line, in which the enemy striketh. And this manner of warding doth not only defend, but also safely hurt.

For the defence of the other two thrusts, the one within, & the other without, a man must take great heed, and it is very necessary that as the enemy increaseth (pretending to strike safely) he carry a slope pace with the left foot & deliver a thrust above hand,

*The Sword and Target.*

upon which the enemy of himself shall run & invest himself. And it is to be considered, that in these thrusts, he that defendeth has great advantage: For the enemy cometh resolutely to strike, not thinking that it may in any other sort be warded than by giving back, but he that wards by increasing, defending & drawing near unto the enemy, is so placed, that he may easily hurt him.

*Of the Sword & Target, called the Square Target.*

**I**t is most manifest, that the Target is a most ancient weapon, found out only for the use of warfare, & not for frays & peculiar quarrels between man & man: albeit since the finding thereof, there have been devised by the industry of man a thousand ways to serve them at their need: From whence it has come to pass, (because it seemed convenient unto the professors of this Art) that this weapon was very commodious & profitable, as well for his fashion, as for that it is a mean or middle weapon, between the buckler & the round Target: That they have framed a special kind of play therewith, although it differeth from the other two weapons in no other thing than in the fashion. Therefore, divers professors of this art, being moved, some by reason of the form, some by the bigness, & some by the heaviness thereof, have accustomed to bear it after divers ways, Those who make most account of the heaviness, would for some consideration, that the right & proper bearing thereof, was to hold it leaning on the thigh, not moving there hence, but being greatly constrained thereunto.

*The Sword and Target.*

Others, who esteemed the form & bigness thereof, because it seemed unto them that the Target without any other motion was most apt of itself to ward all that part of the body which is betwixt the neck and the thigh, bare it with their arm drawn back close to their breast. The which opinion, I mean not at this present to confute, forasmuch as by the showing of mine own opinion it shall appear how mightily they were deceived in the holding thereof, from the true holding whereof springs all the profit which his form and bigness doth give it.

*The manner how to hold the square Target.*

**B**eing desirous to bear great respect as well to all the qualities of this Target (which are, the form, the bigness, and heaviness) as unto that wherewith it may either help or hurt, I say (if a man would that the form thereof do bring him profit without hurt) it is to be held with the high point thereof upwards respecting the head: the part opposite, the low parts of the body: the right part thereof, the right side, and the left, the left side: from this manner of bearing spring these advantages. First, a man may more easily see his enemy, and view what he doth by the point of the corner, which is on the one side, and that is by the high point, by which, if he would behold his enemy, from the head to the feet, it is requisite that he carry his Target, so low, that he discover not too much of his body which is above it: to the warding whereof he cannot come again, but discommodiously, and in long time.

Besides, the said commodity of beholding the ene-

*The Sword and Target.*

my, there is also another that is of warding: For the Target being born after this manner (framing a triangle) the sharp corner thereof respects the forehead, and the sides thereof so spread themselves, that through the least motion, any big man whosoever, may stand safe behind them. And if blows come at the head, be they thrusts or edgeblows, all of them light upon one of the said sides, behind which standeth the head safe without hindering of the eyesight. The other two sides of the Target, right, & left, with very small motion, ward the right and left side of the body, in such sort, that a man may also draw back his arm: For the left side of the Target wards the elbow, which it doth not do, when the high side thereof is carried equal. To conclude therefore, that in holding the Target, his bigness may the better ward; for the causeth about said being superfluous to be repeated again, I counsel, it to be held with the arm stretched forth from the body, not accounting the heaviness to be hurtful, because a man continues not long in so holding it: and if the too long holding be painful, he may draw back his arm, and rest himself. The better to do this and to be able to see the enemy, I say, he shall hold it, his arm stretched out, with the high point outwards, respecting the forehead.

*The hurt of the high ward, at Sword or square Target.*

**M**any Deceits, Falses, and Wards, may be practiced in the handling of these weapons: All which I reserve to the treatise of Deceit or falsing, as unto his pro-

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*The Sword and Target.*



per place, training likewise in this as in all the rest, three ordinary wards, upon which, all the rest depend, and against which they may be opposed.

Standing at this high ward, and pretending to strike the enemy, it is first of all to be provided, that one steal a half pace from behind, and then discharge a thrust about hand, with the increase of another half pace forwards, which being warded by the enemy with his Target only, not moving his body, he may then increase a straight pace of the left foot, & (somewhat lifting up his hand, and abasing the point of his sword) force a thrust from above downwards

*The Sword and Target.*

between the Target & body of the enemy, with the increase of a pace of the right foot: the which thrust will safely speed the enemy, if his body be not first voided. The selfsame thrust may be delivered in this high ward, standing with the right foot behind.

*The defence of the high ward, at Sword  
& square Target.*

**T**he foresaid thrust may easily be warded, if in the very time that it cometh it be encountered with the high point of the Target, but yet with that side which bends towards the right hand. And as soon as the enemy's sword is come one handful within the Target, it must be strongly beaten off by the Target towards the right hand, increasing the same instant a left pace. Then with as great an increase of a pace of the right foot as may be possible, a thrust underneath most be given, already prepared, because a man ought to stand at the low ward for the warding of the thrust above hand.

*The hurt of the broad ward, at sword and square  
Target.*

**I**n this ward likewise, the enemy may be invested on the point of the sword, by going forwards as straightly as is possible and by striking quickly before the enemy. For the Target (whose charge is only to defend) is so great, that it may easily ward all edgeblows, & those chiefly which come from the knee upwards. Farther, when a blow is pretended to be delivered, it is manifest, that a thrust doth enter by a more narrow straight than any edgeblow doth.

*The Sword and Target.*

And therefore, when one would strike the enemy standing at the lock or low ward, he must remember that he approach as near him as he may possible: and being so near, that with his Target put forth one handful more forwards, he may bear away the enemy's sword, then by so beating of it, he shall increase a left pace, and presently after it, with the increase of a pace of the right foot, deliver him a thrust, if it so chance that at the first encounter he struck him not strongly.

*The defence of the broad ward, at sword and square Target.*

Standing at the low ward, one may ward and defend the thrust of the broad ward, divers ways, among all which, there is one way, very easy and sure and thus it is.

For the defence of this thrust, it is necessary, that he stand at the low ward, his sword and arm being in their proper place: and that with his Target something stretched out from his body, he provoke the enemy, who being determined in himself, and coming resolutely to give a thrust he then ought with the increase of a pace of the right foot, to strike the enemy with a low thrust, underneath both his own and his enemy's Target.

*Of the hurt of the low ward, at Sword and Square Target.*

There are many blows to be bestowed, standing at the low ward, all which I esteem as vain & to no purpose, considering the manifold and abundant defence of the Target. Therefore I will restrain myself

*The Sword and Target.*

unto two only which are very strong and hardly to be warded. And they are two thrusts, the one within, the other without, with the right foot both before and behind.

When one finds himself within, with his right foot before, and so near his enemy, that by the increase of a left pace, he may with the right side of his Target, beat away the enemy's sword in the middle thereof, then he ought nimbly to increase that left pace, and (closing in the enemy's sword between his Target and his own sword) to deliver a forcible thrust at the thighs, with the increase of a pace of the right foot. He may also do the very selfsame when he finds himself to stand with his right foot behind, but then he must farther increase a pace of the right foot first, and then continuing still force his sword and paces directly onwards, if he hit not the enemy as he would at the first.

But if it chance that he find himself without, then he must (having first found out fit opportunity to beat off the enemy's sword with his Target) increase a left pace, and placing the high side of his Target under the enemy's sword and his own sword upon it, closing it in, in the middle, increase a pace of the right foot, and discharge a forcible thrust, at the breast or face. And he may do the selfsame, when he standeth with the right foot behind.

*Of the defence of the high ward at sword and square Target.*

For the warding of those two thrusts of the low ward, it is necessary, that a man stand at the same



### *The Sword and Target.*

ward. And as the enemy cometh resolutely determined to thrust within, he must as soon, or more readily than he, increase a left pace, and with the right side of his Target close in the enemy's sword, between it and his own sword, and then to enter perforce, & thrust either between the two Targets or else under them, with the increase of a pace of the right foot.

But if the enemy come without, he must increase the selfsame slope pace, & with the right side of his Target beat off the point of the enemy's sword, & then thrust either above, either beneath, as in that occasion it shall be most for his advantage with the increase of the pace of the right foot. And when in consideration of the abundant defence of the Target he may neither increase his paces, nor deliver a thrust, he must settle himself in the low ward with the right foot behind, which ward I will largely handle in the treatise of deceit or falsing, being as it were his proper place, here ending the true handling of the sword and square Target.

### *Of the Sword and round Target.*

**T**he round Target would require a long & a most exquisite consideration because it is of circular form, most capable, and most perfect of all others. But for that my purpose in this my work, is to write that only which I know doth appertain to this art giving leave to every man to busy himself in his own profession. And leaving a great part of this con-

### *The Sword and Target.*

sideration to the Mathematicians & Historiographers to reason of his divers qualities or passions, either who was inventor thereof, either, whether it be a weapon of antiquity, or of this our age, And coming to discourse of that, wherein it profiteth in this our time, (being a weapon so greatly honored and esteemed of Princes, Lords, & Gentlemen, that besides the use thereof in their affairs, as well by day as by night, they also keep their houses richly decked and beautified therewith,) And considering only that thing, in the round Target, among all other weapons which may either profit or hurt in the handling thereof, I say, that the said round Target has been diversely held, born and used, by divers men in divers ages, as well as the other square Target, and other weapons of defence, as well as of offence. And there want not also men in our time, who to the intent they be not wearied, bear it leaning on their thigh as though that in this exercise (in which only travail and pains are available,) a man should only care for rest and quietness. For by means of these two, strength and activity, (parts in the exercise of weapons, both important and necessary) are obtained and gotten.

Other some, holding their whole Arm bowed together, have carried it altogether flat against their body, not regarding either to ward their belly, or utterly to lose the fight of the enemy, but will at any hand stand (so they think) safe behind it, as behind a wall, not knowing what a matter of weight it is, both to see the enemy, and work other effects, which, (by so holding it) may not be brought to pass.

## *The Sword and Target.*

### *Of the manner how to hold the round Target.*

If a man would so bear the round Target, that it may cover the whole body, and yet nothing hinder him from seeing his enemy, which is a matter of great importance, it is requisite, that he bear it towards the enemy, not with the convex or outward part thereof, altogether equal, plain or even, neither to hold his arm so bowed, that in his elbow there be made (if not a sharp yet) at least a straight corner. For betides that (by so holding it) it wearies the arm: it likewise so hinders the sight, that if he would see his enemy from the breast downwards, of necessity he must either abase his Target, or bear his head so peeping forwards, that it may be sooner hurt than the Target may come to ward it. And farther it so defendeth, that only so much of the body is warded, as the Target is big, or little more, because it cannot more than the half arm from the elbow to the shoulder, which is very little, as every man knows or may perceive: So that the head shall be warded with great pain, and the thighs shall altogether remain discovered, in such sort, that to save the belly, he shall leave all the rest of the body in jeopardy. Therefore, if he would so hold the said Target, that it may well defend all that part of the body, which is from the knee upwards, and that he may see his enemy, it is requisite that he bear his arm, if not right, yet at least bowed so little, that in the elbow there be framed so blunt an angle or corner, that his eyebeams passing near that part of the circumference of the Target, which is near his hand, may see his enemy from the head to the foot. And by hol-

## *The Sword and Target.*

ding the said convex part in this manner, it shall ward all the left side, and the circumference near the hand shall with the least motion defend all the right side, the head and the thighs. And in this manner he shall keep his enemy in sight & defend all that part of the body, which is allotted unto the said Target. Therefore the said Target shall be born, the arm in a manner so straight towards the left side, that the eyesight may pass to behold the enemy without moving, for this only occasion either the head, or the Target.



### *The Sword and Target.*

#### *The hurt of the high ward, at sword and round Target.*

**B**ecause the round Target containeth in it most great & sure defence, therefore ought not any edgeblow which may be easily warded with the single sword without the help of the Target be delivered. Thrusts also enter very difficultly to strike the body, because the Target, by means of the left motion that is, seemeth to be, as it were a wall before the body. And to thrust at the leg is no sure play. That which remaineth to be done is to thrust forcibly with the sword: and when one perceiveth that the point thereof is entered within the circumference of the enemy's Target, it is necessary that he increase a left pace, and with the circumference of his own Target, to beat off the enemy's sword and Target, to the end, it suffer the thrust so given of force to enter in. And (having so beaten & entered) to continue on the thrust in the straight line, with the increase of a pace of the right foot.

When he finds himself in the high ward, he shall increase a half pace with the hinder foot, gathering upon the enemy, as near as he may without danger. And being so nigh that he may drive his sword within the circumference, then as soon as he perceiveth his sword to be within it, (his arm being stretched out at the uttermost length) he ought suddenly to increase a left pace, beating off with the circumference of his own Target, the enemy's Target: and with the increase of a pace of the right foot, to cause his thrust to enter perforce. This also he may practice when the enemy endeavoreth, to withstand the entrance of the thrust, when it is already past, within the

### *The Sword and Target.*

circumference of his Target.

But if the enemy (as it may fall out) ward this thrust not with that part of the circumference, which is near his hand, but with that which is above it (by means whereof his Target discovereth his eyes) then he may very commodiously, increasing his paces as aforesaid, recover his thrust above, and force it underneath, with the increase of a pace of the right foot. And this is a more sure way of thrusting than any other.

#### *The defence of the high ward, at Sword & round Target.*

**F**or the defending of the thrust of the high ward, it is most sure standing at the low ward, and to endeavor to overcome the enemy, by the same skill by the which he himself would obtain the victory. In the very same time, that he delivereth his thrust, a man must suddenly increase a slope pace with the left foot, beating off the enemy's Target with his own, & driving of a thrust perforce with the increase of a pace of the right foot. And with this manner of defence being done with such nimbleness as is required, he doth also safely strike the enemy, who cannot strike him again, because, by means of the said slope pace he is carried out of the line in the which the enemy pretended to strike.

#### *The hurt of the broad ward, at Sword & round Target.*

**I**t is very difficult to strike in this broad ward, if first with much compassing & gathering of the enemy, a man do not assay with the circumference of his Target

### *The Sword and Target.*

near his hand, to beat off the enemy's sword. And being so beaten, to increase a left pace, and farther by adding thereunto the increase of a pace of the right foot, to discharge a thrust. But it shall haply [*by chance, perhaps, mayhap*] be better in the handling of these weapons, not to use this broad ward: for the hand is born out of the straight line, in the which he may strike both safely and readily: And before it return into the said line there is much time spent.

And farther, a man is not then in case with his Target to beat off the enemy's sword: But if happily [*haply*] he be, yet (though he be very ready, as well with the hand as foot) his thrust shall never enter so far that it may hit home: For the enemy, with a very small motion of his Target forwards, may very easily drive the enemy's sword out of the straight line. Therefore, he that would change or shift out of this ward, to the intent to strike, must of necessity be passing nimble & ready, and before he delivereth his blow, must beat the enemy's sword with his Target.

### *The defence of the broad ward, at Sword & round Target.*

**B**ecause in every occasion or accident a man standeth safe in the low ward, I will endeavor in this case, to place him also in the same ward, for the encountering of the hurt of the broad ward. That therefore which by my advise he shall do, is that he take great heed, not to suffer his sword to be beaten off any manner of way. And when the enemy without this beating presumes to enter, he must in the selfsame time increase a left pace & safely deliver a thrust

### *The Sword and Target.*

underneath with the increase of the right foot. And farther, when the enemy shall perform, that is, first find the sword and beat it off, (seeing of necessity if he would enter and hit home, his sword must pass by the circumference of the Target near the hand) then, to withstand the entry, it is requisite that he drive the enemy's sword outwards on the right side with his Target and with the increase of the said pace, that he enter and strike him.

### *The hurt of the low ward, at Sword & round Target.*

**A** man may strike in this ward, the right foot being behind, and before, & in both ways, he may bear his sword either within or without. If therefore he find himself to stand with the right foot behind and without, he shall assay at any hand, before he determine to strike, to find the enemy's sword with his own, and as soon as he finds it shall clap to his Target, and strike perforce with a low thrust, increasing with the right foot. But finding himself to stand within, no more with his sword, than he doth with his Target, he shall prove whether he can find the enemy's sword, and having found it, shall strain it fast between his own sword and Target, & then shall deliver a thrust with the increase of a pace of the right foot, the which thrust of force speeds: This being performed, he shall settle himself in this, or in either of these ways in the low ward with the right foot before. And as he so standeth in this ward, he may after the same sort strike either within or without.

### *The Sword and Target.*

Therefore finding himself within, he shall provide to meet with the enemy's sword, and with the increase of a left pace, shall clap to his Target, for the more safety, and then drive on a forcible thrust, with the increase of a pace of the right foot. And finding himself to bear his sword within in the said ward, and with his right foot behind, he shall endeavor to find the enemy's sword with the Target, and having found it, shall close it in between his own sword and Target, & with the increase of a left pace, shall perforce hurt the enemy, with the increase of a pace of the right foot.

Now, all these thrusts, no doubt shall speed every time that the enemy either makes no traverse motion with his body, either as he striketh, cometh directly forwards, or else being fearful, goeth directly backwards, for it is not possible that one man go so fast directly backwards, as another may forwards. It is therefore diligently to be observed in this ward, never to determine to strike, either in the handling of these, or of any other kind of weapons, if (with one of them) he shall not first find the enemy's sword. The which redounds to the great profit of every man, but especially of those, who have strong arms, for that they are the better able to beat back the enemy's weapon.

#### *Of the defence of the low ward, at Sword and round Target.*

**A**ll the foresaid thrusts are warded, by not suffering the sword to be found by the enemy with either of his weapons. For the enemy (not finding it, will not assure himself, or presume to enter, without first finding of the sword) may most easily be struck and

### *The Case of Rapiers.*

not strike, if a man increase a slope pace, (to the end he may void his body from hurt,) and with the increase of a straight pace of the right foot, do also discharge a thrust beneath. And after this order he may strike (not only when his sword is not found by the enemy, but also when it chanceth to be found) if he be ready and nimble to make his slope pace, and to beat off, as forcible as he may, the enemy's Target with his own sword and Target, thereby forcing a low thrust to enter in, with the increase of a pace with the right foot. And thus much concerning the true striking & defending of the sword and round Target.

#### *Of the Case of Rapiers.*

**T**here are also used nowadays, as well in the schools, as in the lists, two Swords or Rapiers, admitted, and approved both of Princes, and of the professors of this art, for honorable and knightly weapons, albeit they be not used in the wars. Wherefore I shall not vary from my purpose, if I reason also of these, as fair as is agreeable to true art. To him that would handle these weapons, it is necessary that he can as well manage the left hand as the right, which thing shall be (if not necessary) yet most profitable in every other kind of weapon. But in there principally he is to resolve himself, that he can do no good, without that kind of nimbleness and dexterity. For seeing they are two weapons, & yet of one selfsame kind, they ought equally and indifferently to be handled, the one performing that which the other doth, & every of them being apt as well to strike as defend.

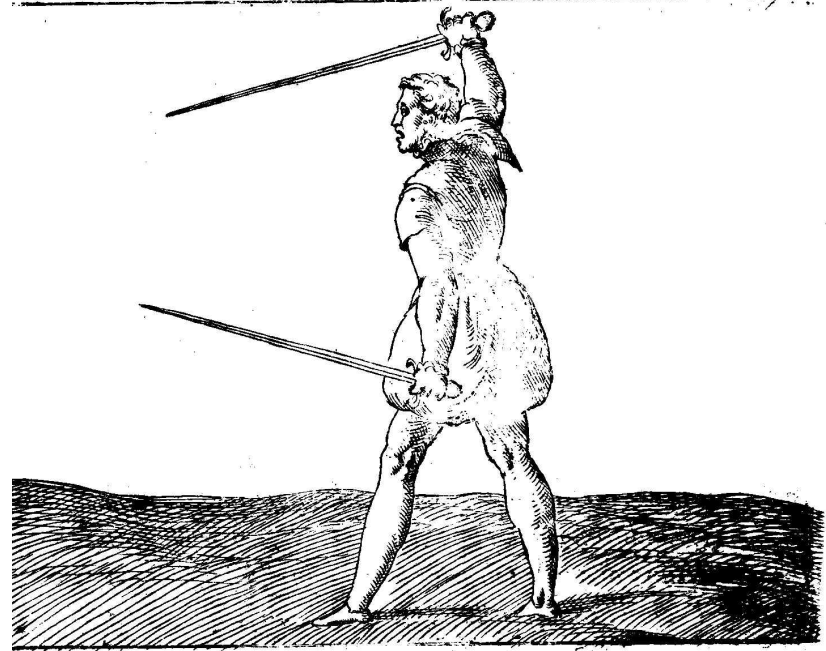
### *The Case of Rapiers.*

And therefore a man ought to accustom his body, arms and hands as well to strike as defend. And he which is not much practiced and exercised therein, ought not to make profession of this art: for he shall find himself to be utterly deceived.

#### *The manner how to handle two Rapiers.*

**I**t is most manifest that both these weapons may strike in one and the same time: for there may be delivered jointly together two downright edgeblows on high and two beneath: two reverses, and two thrusts, and are so rich and plentiful in striking, that it seemeth they may be used only to strike. But this ought not to be practiced, neither may it without great danger. For all that, whatsoever may be done with either of them, is divided into striking and defending. That this is true, it may be perceived in the single Sword, which assays both to strike and defend. And those who have taken no such heed, but have been bent only to strike being moved there through choler, either believing, that they had to deal with an ignorant person, have remained thereby mightily wounded. Of this, there might be laid down infinite examples, which I leave to the intent I may not swerve from my purpose. I say therefore that of the two Rapiers which are handled, the one must be applied towards the other to strike, regarding always to use that first which wardeth, than that which striketh: for first a man must endeavor to defend himself, and then to strike others.

### *The Case of Rapiers.*



#### *Of the high ward at two Rapiers.*

**P**resupposing always, that either hand is very well exercised, as well in striking as in defending this high ward shall be framed after two ways, which yet in a manner is all one. The one with the right foot, the other with the left, so working continually, that the hinder arm be aloft, the former beneath in manner, as when the low ward is framed at the single sword. And as a man striketh, he must always maintain & continue this high ward; which at the two rapiers, is the most perfect & surest

*The Case of Rapiers.*

and he may easily perform & do it: for while he enters to give a high thrust with his hinder foot, although that foot be behind yet it must accompany the arm until it hath finished his thrust, & settled itself in the low ward. The other sword & hand (which was born together with the former foot in the low ward) remaining behind by reason of the increase of the high thrust, must presently be lifted up, & be placed in the same high ward.

Therefore it is to be noted, that whosoever means to shift from this ward & strike, whether it be with his right or left foot, before or behind, it is requisite that he stand without, & when he would strike, he shall first prove with his low sword, whether he can find the enemy's weapons, & having suddenly found them, he shall nimbly beat them back, and (in a manner) in the same instant force on a high thrust, with the increase of a pace of the right foot: from the which, if the enemy (for saving of himself) shall hastily and directly give backwards, he shall follow him, delivering presently the other high thrust behind, already lifted up. And this thrust will safely hit home & speed, because it is not possible that one may go so fast backwards, as another may forwards.

Farther, as well in this ward, as in others, the ward may be framed with the right foot before, & the right arm lifted, & so contrariwise. But because there is small force in this ward both in the feet & hands, which stand not commodiously either to strike or defend, and seeing there is required in the handling of those weapons great strength and steadfastness I have thought good, not to lay it down, as to small purpose.

*The Case of Rapiers.*

*The defence of the high ward, &c.*

**T**he direct opposition & defence of the high ward is the low ward, the manner whereof shall be seen in his proper place. That which principally is to be considered (for the low ward also, in like sort as the other may be framed after two sorts) is this that of necessity a man stand with the same foot before as the enemy doth, to wit: if he bear the right foot before, to put forth the right foot also, and to endeavor as the enemy doth, to stand without, for of both ways this is of the more advantage and safety. Finding himself therefore without, in the low ward, he must not refuse, but rather suffer his sword to be found and beaten by the enemy: for this doth redound much more to his own advantage than to his enemy's because the enemy carrieth small force in his low hand wherewith he endeavors to find and beat off the sword, considering it is born too far off from the other: for that which is slenderly united, is less forcible: whereas standing at the low ward, he beareth both his hands low near together and sufficiently strong. Therefore as soon as the enemy having beaten back the sword, shall resolve himself to give a thrust, he must increase a slope pace, & with his hinder low sword, drive the enemy's high thrust outwards toward the right side, if it chance that he were in the low ward with his right foot before, And suddenly with the other low sword behind (which was suffered to be beaten off by the enemy, because it might turn the more to his disadvantage: foreseeing the enemy's sword being slenderly united, as I have said before, carrieth but small force, it was the rather beaten off and disappointed: So that as soon as the slope pace is increased and the

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*The Case of Rapiers.*

said high thrust warded, before the enemy place his other sword also in the high ward, he may with the straight pace of the right foot deliver a low thrust continuing still to beat down the enemy's sword with his own low sword, that is born before. And this manner of warding is most safe and sure: for besides that it striketh the enemy with the slope pace, it doth likewise in such sort deliver the body from hurt, that of force the enemy is disappointed. Neither is there any other sure way to ward this high thrust, being so strong, and besides, having so great increase of pace.

This manner of defence is most strong and sure, & is done with that sword which is farthest off. Yet there is another way, & that is, with the low sword before, which is no less stronger and sure than the other, but yet much shorter. For look in what time the other defendeth, this striketh.

Therefore in the low ward it is to be noted, (when the enemy moveth, pretending to beat off the sword and therewithal to enter,) that then the point of the sword before be lifted up, keeping the hand so steadfast, that it oppose itself and keep outwards the enemy's high thrust, and having made this bar, to keep out his weapons, then & in the selfsame time, he shall increase a straight pace, & with the low sword behind shall strike the enemy in the breast, to whom it is impossible to do any effectual thing, or to avoid the said stroke for that (by means of the point of the sword lifted up in manner aforesaid) both his swords are so hindered, that they may not safely strike, either with the edge or point.

*The Case of Rapiers.*

*Of the hurt of the broad ward at the two Rapiers.*

**T**his broad ward, may in the selfsame manner be framed two ways, and it may deliver the selfsame blows, in the one as in the other: This ward is framed with one foot before, and one foot behind, the arm (which is born on the side of the hinder foot) being stretched wide, & broad outwards. Therefore when one standeth at this ward, and would deliver as straight and as safe a thrust as is possible, he shall first prove with his low Rapier, whether he can find the enemy's Rapier, which being found, he shall turn his fist outwards, and force the enemy's Rapier so much, that it may do no hurt, and then withal increasing presently a slope pace, shall go forewords to strike the enemy in the thigh, with the wide thrust. He might as well also thrust him in the flank, or in the head, but yet the other thrust is used, because the Rapier, which is directed to the thigh, is in place to hinder the enemy's other Rapier to light on the legs.

And as in the high ward, so likewise in this, he must always stand without, and having delivered the wide thrust, he ought presently to widen the other arm, and settle himself in the broad ward.

*Of the defence of the broad ward at the two Rapiers.*

**F**or the defence of the thrust of the broad ward, it is necessary that a man stand at the low ward, and therewithal diligently observe, the motions of the enemy's body, how it compasses and passes to and fro, by knowledge and due considerations whereof, he may easily defend himself. If therefore the right

*The Case of Rapiers.*

arm be stretched out wide, the right foot also (being behind) shall be in like manner widened, the which, when it increaseth forwards, shall also carry with it the right shoulder, voiding always with the left side.

And the selfsame must be considered, & practiced, when he standeth at his ward, the contrary way. That therefore which he must do, for the defence of himself, shall be to void that part of his body, which may be hurt by the enemy's wide and broad thrust, and to oppose himself against that part of his enemy, which cometh forwards pretending to strike: And this he shall do, at what time the enemy (finding the sword) would come forwards in his thrust. And in the selfsame time, (assuring himself with his own low sword) shall increase a slope pace, thereby investing and encountering that part of the enemy which came striking, and with which he framed the broad ward. Neither can it be safe striking at any other place, for either he shall find nothing to encounter, by means of the motion of the body, or else if he do not oppose himself against that shoulder of the enemy which carries the hurt, he is in hazard to be struck by the enemy's broad thrust.

*Of the hurt of the low Ward at the two Rapiers.*

**T**he low ward shall be framed after two ways, the one with the right foot before, the other with the left, and each of them may strike, either within, either without. The way which striketh within, has one blow, the way which striketh without has two, and

*The Case of Rapiers.*

in all, they are six. I will lay down but three, because they differ not from the other three, but only in the hand and foot, which must be placed before, so that they are the selfsame, for I have already presupposed, that he who takes upon him to handle these weapons, can as well use the one hand, as he can the other. He may therefore find himself to stand with his right foot before and within, (I understand by within, when he beareth one of his swords between both his enemy's swords, and likewise when the enemy carries one of his, between the other two. It is likewise true, that this also may be laid within, to wit, when both weapons are born in the middle between the other two. But I suppose no man so foolish, who handling these weapons, will suffer both his swords to be without being a very unsure ward whereof I leave to speak.

That therefore, which he is to do, (finding himself with both his rapiers below, & within, with his right foot before, after the said first way of being within) shall be, that marking when he may close in the enemy's Rapier, between the which the enemy's rapier shall be so shut in and hard, that it may do no hurt, and one of the two Rapiers, that is to say, the right Rapier shall pass under the enemy's rapier, and thrust safely. And his other Rapier albeit, it may thrust directly, yet (for the better saving of himself, from the enemy's other Rapier that is at liberty) he shall bear it somewhat abasing his hand, with the point upwards, the which point shall safeguard him, from the enemy's said Rapier, although this last note, be superfluous. For seeing the enemy must ward himself

### *The Case of Rapiers.*

from the thrust that hurteth him, he hath no leisure, nor happily mindeth to strike, but only to defend himself, either by voiding his body, or else by some other shift, which he shall then find out.

The way of warding without, may strike directly after two ways: The first, by beating off the enemy's Rapier, with his own that is before, and by delivering a thrust, either at the breast or head, with the Rapier that is behind, increasing therewithal a slope pace, and settling himself in the low ward, with his left foot before.

The second is, by taking opportunity, which he may do, if he be nimble. And he ought with the increase of a slope pace, to drive the point, of his former Rapier directly towards the enemy, and above the enemy's Rapier. And his other own rapier, which before the increase was behind, he must force on, under the enemy's rapier. And thus, not giving over, these two thrusts must be strongly and nimbly driven towards the enemy, by means whereof being over taken, the enemy has no other remedy to save himself, than to retire back: for he may not come forwards, but he must run himself upon the weapons and that he will not do. So then, the enemy retiring himself may be followed, as far as the increase of the right foot will bear, then, settling in the low ward.

### *Of the defence of the low ward at the two Rapiers.*

All three thrusts of the low ward, by standing at the same ward, may easily be warded, and that after one manner. If a man remember first to void his body from hurt, by the increase of a pace, that is very slope,

### *Of the two hand Sword.*

or crooked, either before the enemy cometh thrusting, either as soon as he moveth himself for the same purpose, or if he be active and nimble to traverse, and is ending himself to strike the enemy.

Therefore when any of the same three thrusts come, and before he perceiveth his Rapier to be closed, and hard in, he shall move a slope pace, to the intent to avoid himself from hurt, and with his Rapier, which is at liberty, he shall go forwards and deliver a thrust at the enemy's face, which thrust, doth surely speed, if he be resolute to enter.

### *Of the two hand Sword.*

The two hand Sword, as it is used nowadays being four handfuls in the handle, or more, having also the great cross, was found out, to the end it should be handled one to one at an equal match, as other weapons, of which I have entreated. But because one may with it (as a galleon, among many galleys) refit many Swords or other weapons: Therefore in the wars, it is used to be placed near unto the Ensign or Ancient, for the defence thereof, because, being of itself able to contend with many, it may the better safeguard the same. And it is accustomed to be carried in the City, as well by night as by day, when it so chanceth that a few are constrained to withstand a great many. And because his weight and bigness, requires great strength, therefore those only are allotted to the handling thereof, which are mighty and big to behold, great and strong in body, of stout and valiant courage.

### *The two hand Sword.*

Who (forasmuch as they are to encounter many, and to the end they may strike the more safely and amaze them with the fury of the Sword) do altogether use to deliver great edgeblows, down right and reversed, fetching a full circle, or compass therein, staying themselves sometimes upon one foot, sometimes on the other, utterly neglecting to thrust, and persuading themselves, that the thrust serves to amaze one man only, but those edgeblows are of force to encounter many. The which manner of skirmishing, besides that, it is most gallant to behold, being accompanied with exceeding swiftness in delivery, (for otherwise it works no such effect) it is also most profitable, not properly of itself, but because men considering the fury of the sword, which greatly amazeth them, are not resolute to do that, which otherwise they could not choose but do. That is, either to encounter the sword in the middle towards the handle, when it carries small force, or else to stand far off, watching the sword go, & is carried compassing in his great circle, being of the compass of ten arms, or more, & then to run under it, and deliver a thrust. And these two ways are effectual, when such men are met withal, who are exercised to enter nimbly and strike, or such as dare, and have the spirit & courage, to set, and oppose themselves single against the two hand sword, men as the single two hand sword adventures to oppose itself against many. Neither is this thing to be marveled at, for in these our days, there be things performed of greater activity & danger. And there be some which dare do this with the sword and round Target, but yet they are not resolute to strike first, but will receive and sustain

### *The two hand Sword.*

the blow, with the round Target, and then enter and thrust, this truly betokeneth great courage & activity, although not such as is required in this behalf.

Thus much concerning that, which appertaineth to the defence of the circular blows, of the two hand sword, when it endeavors to oppose itself against many. And forasmuch as men have, and sometimes do use, both in the lists & other places, to fight single combats, one to one with the single two hand sword, I will also declare my opinion touching the same.

#### *Of the manner how to handle the two hand Sword, in single combat.*

To those, who would cunningly handle the two hand Sword in single combat, it is principally necessary that (as in other weapons) they be practiced and have the skill, to use the one hand as well as the other, and that they be both active in body, and strong in the arms, which are required in the managing of each weapon. And farther it is requisite that they carry the principles of this Art, surely fixed in their minds and memories, by means whereof they may become bold and resolute, in as much as they have to do, either in striking or defending.

They ought furthermore to consider, how the two hand Sword is used, and how it ought to be used.

Touching the first, All men use to deliver thrusts, as well as edgeblows, down right, and reversed, with both hands to the Sword which way albeit, it be profitable in the bestowing of edgeblows, as being the better able to sustain the Sword, yet in discharging of thrusts it is hurtful, for it causeth them to be much shorter, than they would be, if in the beginning, they

### *Of the two hand Sword.*

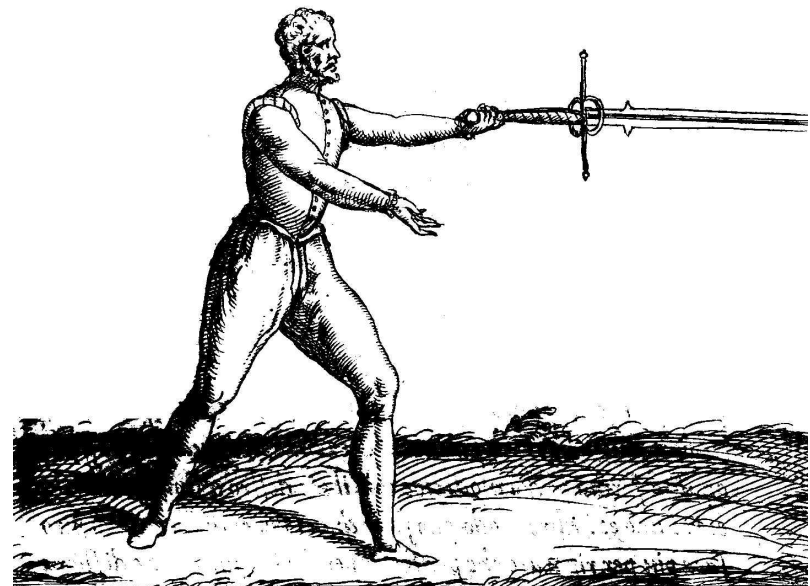
were forcibly delivered with both the hands and. then, by taking away one hand from the cross, they were sprung as far forth, as the pommel hand, foot, and all the body of that side, may be stretched out. For, being discharged in this manner, if they hit home they make great passage, and if they be voided, yet the Two hand sword may be quickly had again, by the retiring of a pace, and of the hand and arm, placing the other hand there where it was, and so settling in the low ward. Therefore, when one finds himself to stand in the high ward, (the which at the two hand Sword, is framed either with the right side towards the enemy, either with the left, in either of which ways, the arms would be born aloft, and far off from the body, causing the point somewhat to bend both towards the ground and the body, to the end it may defend both the length of the body, and cover it in a manner thwarting or crossing, it being so far off from the sword.

Farther, in this ward, the hand that is towards the enemy, must take hold fast of the handle near the cross, and underneath, the other hand above, and near the pommel. I say standing thus at the high ward, he may either deliver a thrust, either a down right blow of the edge.

The thrust is discharged (as soon as the enemy's sword is found) as far in the beginning as he may with both arms: Then, taking away the cross hand, he shall force it farther on with the pommel hand, as much as he may stretch it forth, always in the discharge, increasing a slope pace. And the thrust being thus delivered, he shall presently retire his

### *The two hand Sword.*

said pace, and return his hand again to the cross, settling himself either in the high or low ward. But if he would deliver a down right blow with the edge which I counsel him not to do, because he may easily be struck under it, he shall first discharge a thrust with both his hands, and then increasing a pace, shall turn the said down right blow, stretching out the arm as much as he may. In the delivery of which blow, if he meet with the enemy's sword, he shall take away his hand from the cross, & stretch out the pommel hand as much as he may, with the increase of a pace, And farther, turning the said hand which holds the sword upwards, to the end, to lengthen the thrust, he shall drive, and force it on, and presently retire himself in manner aforesaid.



*Of The two hand Sword.*

*Of the defence of the high ward, at the two hand sword.*

**T**he low ward, shall be the defence of the high ward, and it may be framed with the right foot before & behind, in such sort, as the said high ward, the which shall be declared in his proper place.

Therefore, regarding to place himself for his defence in the low ward (and that directly contrary to his enemy, that is to say, if the enemy stand with the right foot before, to put his left foot foremost, and as the thrust or the downright blow cometh) he shall encounter it without, and as soon as he has found the enemy's sword, he shall void his cross hand, and increase a pace, and therewithal deliver a thrust, with the pommel hand, as far as it will stretch out. The which thrust will easily speed, if the enemy come resolutely in delivering of his blow: for he that come directly to encounter the point of the sword, with that part of his body which increaseth forwards. Thus much for the defence of the high thrust.

The downright blow may be warded, if while the enemy's sword is in his compass, he nimbly deliver a thrust under it. Or else, if he would encounter it, (as soon as he has so done) he do void his cross hand, and with the increase of a pace, thrust as far forth as the pommel hand will stretch out.

*Of the hurt of the low ward, at the two hand sword.*

**B**ecause the broad ward in handling of this weapon is painful and unsure, I leave to speak thereof, and come to the low ward, which is framed two ways, to wit: either with the right or with the left

foot before, and in either way, one may strike both within and without. Within, is rather to ward, than to strike: for the enemy that standeth without, has the greater advantage,

Finding himself therefore within, and bearing the sword firmly, he shall force and drive on a thrust, as far as both arms may stretch out together, increasing a pace and settling in the low ward, if he do not speed.

But finding himself to stand without, and as soon as he has found the enemy's sword, he shall deliver a thrust, first, at the length of both arms, then, voiding the cross hand, increase a pace and deliver it out at uttermost length of the pommel hand, and immediately after the thrust, retire his hand and pace, staying himself again in the said low ward.

*The defence of the low ward, at the two hand sword.*

**I**t is a general rule, that the true defence of all blows is the low ward. Therefore, when one standeth thereat, if there come a thrust without (because it is necessary in this case to stand within,) he shall do no other than encounter the enemy's sword, and thrust his arm forwards, to the end he may void it from his body, and farther retire his foot more backwards, & as it were, in a compass, thereby the better saving his body from the hurt.

But if the thrust come within (by reason whereof he should stand without) as soon as the enemy's sword is encountered he shall deliver a thrust with both his hands, and then voiding his cross hand, he shall

*The weapons of*

deliver it strongly with his pommel hand, with the increase of a pace. And this thrust doth safely speed. Neither is it to be doubted, that by holding the sword with one hand, the enemy may take holdfast there, for he has enough to do, to retire himself, and ward the thrust, neither can he perform so many things in one time.

*Of the weapons of the Staff, namely, the  
Bill, the Partisan, the Halberd,  
and the Javelin.*

**B**ecause it may seem strange unto many, that I have here placed these four sorts of weapons together, as though I would frame but one only way for the handling of all, although they differ in form, from which form is gathered their difference in use. Therefore, forasmuch as I am of opinion, that all of them may be handled in manner after one way, it shall not be amiss, if I declare the reason thereof, speaking first of every one severally by itself, and then generally of all together, holding and maintaining always for my conclusion, that the skill of handling of them, helps a man to the knowledge of all the rest, for as much as concerns true art.

*Of the Partisan.*

**C**oming therefore to the Partisan, as unto the plainest, and as unto that, where upon all the rest depend, omitting to show who was the inventor thereof, as being to small purpose: I say, that it was

*The Staff, &c.*

found out to no other end, than for that the foot men in the wars, might be able with them to hurt those horsemen (whom they might not reach with their swords) as well with their point as with their edge. Further, weapons which are to be cast, or sprung forth at length of the arm, are for the most part deceitful, by means whereof, they might hurt as well the Archers on horseback, as other horsemen.

Therefore, these Partisans were made big and of great weight, and of perfect good steel, to the end they might break the mail and divide the Iron.

And that this is true, it is to be seen in the ancient weapons of this sort, which are great and so well tempered, that they are of force to cut any other Iron. Afterwards, as men had considered, that as this weapon was only to strike, it might in some part thereof, have of as well something to ward withal, whereby it might be said to be a perfect weapon, they devised to add unto it two crooks or forks, by the which, that blow might be warded, which parting from the point and continuing down along the staff, would come to hurt the person. And these forks, or (I may say) these defences were by some men placed on that part of the Iron, which next adjoined to the staff, making them crooked & sharp, & a handful long, & for the most part, with the points toward the enemy, to the end they might serve not only to defend, but also to strike. And to the end, the bigness and weight of the Partisan, (which ought to be apt and commodious to be handled) might not be increased, they diminished part of the Iron thereof, and gave the same to the forks or defences: And by that means they

### *The Pike.*

framed another weapon called a Javelin which (because the broadness, and happily the weight thereof is diminished) is not very forcible to strike with the edge, but all his power consists in three thrusts. Othersome afterwards would not that these defences should be placed at the lower-most part of the Iron, but in the middle thereof. And these men bearing great respect to the blows of the edge, left the Iron which should serve for the defence behind, in his breadth and weight, adjoining thereunto in the opposite part of the right edge, a most sharp point of Iron, to the end, that what way so ever it were moved, it might strike and hurt. But if any man object & say: if the said point of Iron were put there in respect of striking, they might also as well have left there an edge, which being longer would strike more easily. I answer, that the blows of the false (that is to say, the hinder or back edge of the weapon) are very weak, and the point doth strike and hurt more easily than the edge. And therefore it was requisite that there be facility where there was weakness. These men by these means framed the ancient weapon called the Halberd, out of the which, men of our age have derived & made another kind of Halberd & Bill. And these bearing also respect to some one profitable thing or other, did maintain the defence, and increase the hurting or offence. The respect was, that as they discoursed & pondered with themselves at length they very warily perceived that a man with weapon in his hand, might make six motions, that is to say, one towards the head, one towards the feet, one towards the right side, one towards the left, one forwards & to-

### *The Bill, &c.*

wards the enemy, the other backward & toward himself. Of all the which, five of them might very well strike, & the last might neither strike nor defend. Therefore, providing that this last motion also should not be idle & unprofitable, they added a hook with the point turned towards the handle, with the which one might very easily tear armor, & draw perforce men from their horses. Those, who framed the middle or mean Halberd, would that the said hook should be placed in the safe or backer edge. And those that devised the Bill, would have it on the right edge, leaving the edge so long that the hook might not altogether hinder the blow of the edge, but rather (to the end the edge might make the greater effect) they would that the hook should bear an edge & be cutting in every part thereof. Where I gather, that the Bill is the most perfect weapon of all others, because it striketh & hurteth in every of these six motions, & his defences both cut & prick: which the new kind of Halberd doth not perform, being framed after the said fashion, & rather for lightness aptness & bravery, than for that it carries any great profit with it: for the edge is not so apt to strike, & the point thereof is so weak, that hitting any hard thing, either it bows or breaks: neither is it much regarded in the wars, the Harquebus & the Pike being nowadays the strength of all armies.

Hereby it may be gathered, that with the Partisan a man may strike with the point & edge in five motions: with the Javelin, with the point only & in such motions as it may: with the Halberd and Bill, both with the point and edges in six motions. But because these weapons for the most part are exercised



*The weapons of*

and used to enter through divers Pikes & other weapons, and to break and disorder the battle array, to which end, and purpose, if it be used, than that manner of managing and handling is very convenient which is practiced nowadays, and thus it is. The Partisan, Halberd, and Bill (but not the Javelin, being in this case nothing effectual because it has small force in the edge) must be born in the middle of the staff, with the heel thereof before, and very low, and the point near a man's head. And with the said heel, or half staff underneath, from the hand downwards, he must ward and beat off the points and thrusts of the Pikes and other weapons, and having made way, must enter with the increase of a pace of the hinder foot, and in the same instant, let fall his weapon as forcibly as he may, and strike with the edge athwart the Pikes. This kind of blow is so strong (being delivered as it ought, considering it cometh from above downwards, and the weapon of itself is very heavy) that it will cut asunder not only Pikes, but also any other forcible impediment. In these affairs the Javelin is not used, because it works no such effect. But when one is constrained to use it, he ought neither to beat off, neither to ward with the staff, but altogether with the Iron and his defences, remembering, as soon as he has beaten off & made way of entrance, to thrust only: for to handle it in delivering of edgeblows prevails not, considering the small force it carries in that matter of striking. And as among all the foresaid four weapons, the Javelin in this kind of skirmish, is least profitable, so the Partisan is most excellent & commodious, for

*The Bill and Halberd.*

having no other defence, it is provided in the staff, and is most forcible, to cut the Pikes by means of his heaviness and weight, and the rather, because it is unfurnished and void of other things, which in this case might let and hinder the edgeblow. Therefore the Partisan shall be used (as in his own proper quality) to enter among the Pikes, and cut them asunder, and other weapons also partly for that cause, and partly to skirmish single, one to one. Which although it be not ordinarily accustomed, yet nevertheless, because both this, and the rest of the weapons, may be handled in single combat, and do contain in them, as well offence, as defence, Farther, to the end, the wise and discrete (happening to be in such affairs) may be skillful to determine with themselves, what they may and ought to do: I will show my opinion what may be done with these weapons in single combat reasoning jointly of the Javelin, Bill, and Halberd, because there is but a small difference in the Javelin, And the Bill, and the Halberd, are in a manner all one, and the very selfsame.

*Of Bill against Bill, Halberd against Halberd,  
or Halberd against Bill.*

**F**orasmuch, as the Bill and Halberd, have the selfsame offence and defence, and be of one length: I thought it not good to make two Treatises thereof, because I should be forced to repeat the selfsame thing in both, the which, being superfluous, would breed loathsomeness. I say therefore, that whosoever would handle the Bill or Halberd, which being all



one, I will name indifferently, by the name of the Halberd, I say, to him that would use them, & strike as well with the point, as with the edge, which blows at these weapons are mighty and forcible, it is necessary, that he consider the difficulty in striking with the point, and the danger in striking with the edge. That it is difficult to strike with the point, it is most clear, because the full course of the point, may very easily be hindered and tied, by means of so many hooks and forks which are in the Halberd.

And that it is perilous to strike with the edge, has been declared when I entreated of the single Rapier,

### *The Halberd.*

which peril ought the more to be considered in this weapon, because by means of his length, it frames a greater circle, and therein giveth more time to enter under it.

Therefore no man may safely handle the Halberd, if first he do not consider these two things, the one, (which he may very hardly withstand) and that is the thrust, because these hooks and forks, are properly belonging unto it and are impossible to be untied and taken away, when a man would, the form being as it is. 2. The peril of the edgeblow, may some time be voided, if he be nimble and bold, performing all that in due time which shall here be laid down for his instruction.

### *How to strike with the Halberd.*

**I**n the handling of this weapon, there shall be framed (by my counsel) no more than one ward, being the hands, for the more surety in the middle of the staff. And that ward must be the low ward. The hands must be somewhat distant, one from another, and the point of the weapon directly towards the enemy, regarding always to place himself with the contrary foot before, to that, which the enemy shall set forth, that is to say: If the enemy be before with the left foot, then to stand with his right foot, or contrary wise. And standing in manner aforesaid, he must always prove & try (before he be determined to deliver a thrust) to beat off the enemy's weapon, which being done, presently deliver a forcible thrust toward the enemy. But because it may lightly so fall out, that in

*The Halberd. &c.*

beating off the enemy's weapon (the enemy happily pretending to do the like) the weapons be entangled fast together. Therefore, as soon as it is perceived that they be grappled fast, standing sure, and firmly on his feet, he shall increase a pace towards the enemy, lifting up aloft the enemy's weapon, together with his own by force of the said entangling, and then with the heel, or the blunt end of the Halberd shall strike the enemy in the breast, (for which consideration it should not dislike me, if for that purpose, there be fastened in the said blunt end, a strong and sharp pike of iron) and as soon as he has struck with the said blunt end, (because, by means of the said lifting up, the weapons shall be now unhooked) and retiring that pace which he had before increased, without removing of his hands, he shall deliver a strong edgeblow, which then is very commodious.

And it is to be understood, that this edgeblow being delivered in this means, is so strong, that it is apt to cut the enemy's sword, if it be opposed in his ward. Only that which is to be regarded in the delivering of this blow, is, that he be nimble, and of stout courage, not doubting that he shall be struck again, because he is to go so near his enemy, for besides, that he is in such case, that he may easily ward any blow, the enemy finds no way, to strike, except he perform it in two times, to wit, by retiring his pace and Halberd, and then by delivering a thrust.

That this way of striking is good, after the tying, and entangling of the weapons, it may be hereby understood, that as a man endeavors to untie, and unloosen the weapons, either by retiring himself, either

*Of the Halberd.*

by carrying them on the one side, to the intent to strike, he may then go forth of the straight line, by going to one of the both sides, or else lose one time, by retiring himself, under which two inconveniences, either he must needs be hurt, or else defending himself, tie fast the weapons again. But these inconveniences happen not in the foresaid manner of striking.

Farther, a man may strike after another way to wit, as soon as by the entangling of the weapons they are lifted up, to the intent to unhook, and untie them, he must change his hands, and deliver an edgeblow, either athwart, either on high, either a low, for it is commodious any way, so that he change his hands and retire a pace. But this is not so commodious in the other way, because he may not strike but only downwards. But in this manner of changing hands, he may easily strike the enemy in that place, where he perceiveth him to be most discovered, be it above or beneath.

*Of the defence of the heel, or blunt end of the Halberd.*

**F**or the defence of the above said two blows, it is requisite as I have already said, that a man stand with the contrary foot before, to that, of the enemy's. And as the enemy (after the fastening of the weapons) endeavors to lift them up, (being well aware thereof) he ought to recover his Halberd by the increase of a pace, and strike with the heel at the enemy's thigh or belly and then changing his hands, he shall deliver an edgeblow, without any other retiring of himself, or moving of his hands, The which blow shall

### *The Javelin.*

lightly speed, being nimbly delivered. And when it speeds not, yet, it will safely ward the edgeblow, which the enemy shall give. And this may suffice forasmuch as concerns the blows of the Halberd in single combat, wherein there is any difficulty to be found, the which, a man must seek to avoid by all means, especially endeavoring by all possible ways to deliver thrusts, without tying or entangling of his weapon. But although the enemy's weapon, may not be tied to any prescript law or order, (for he also uses, all the policy he may to avoid danger) yet these blows with their fastenings are laid down, because I presuppose, that who so is skillful to strike, notwithstanding these difficulties, will be much more adventurous, in striking when he shall find little, or nothing to hinder him, As for example, when in fight he meets with a weapon of the Staff of the selfsame, or of greater length, but yet, void of hooks or forks: For seeing his own weapon, is only able to hook, and drive outwards the enemy's weapon, he may safely deliver an edgeblow, with the increase of a pace, being sure, that he may not be struck again; but only with a thrust, which the enemy may not deliver, but of force, must either retire his staff, either his feet, under which time, an edgeblow may be delivered without danger.

#### *Of the hurt and ward of the Javelin.*

**T**he selfsame ward, shall be framed with the Javelin, as with the Halberd. And because, of necessity, the weapons will be entangled,

### *The Javelin.*

I say, the very same thrusts shall be given therewith, as are delivered with the Halberd. But because the edge of the Javelin is weak, and the pacing which is made when the weapons are fastened, is only profitable for the giving of the edgeblow: Therefore in handling of the Javelin, this entangling or fastening is by all means possible to be avoided. But when a man is to strike his enemy, let him first prove, to beat off his Javelin, and then to force on a thrust, in this manner.

Finding the enemy's Javelin to be within, (by within, I understand, when the Javelin is between the enemy's arms, or against them) then he must force it outwards, and drive a thrust with his own Javelin, at the length of the staff (without moving of his feet) at the enemy's face. Finding it without, he ought to beat it backwards, and increasing a pace, to launch out the Javelin at the enemy's face, at the length of the staff and arm, immediately retiring his pace, & hand, and afterwards settle himself in the same low ward.

#### *Of the defence of the thrusts of the Javelin.*

**F**or him that would defend himself from those two thrusts, and strike under them, it is necessary to call to remembrance the most subtle consideration of times, without knowledge whereof, there is no man that may safely bear himself under any weapon: Coming therefore to the said consideration, I say, that if the enemy would beat off the Javelin, (his own Javelin being either within, either without) of force he must enlarge and widen it from out the

### *Of the Partisan, and Pike.*

straight line, if he would as aforesaid forcibly beat off the other Javelin. Therefore at what time so ever a man sees the enemy's Javelin wide of the straight line, then, and in the same time (in the which it cometh purposing to beat off) he must nimbly deliver a thrust. And in like manner, finding himself, either within, either without, and the enemy's Javelin something wide of the straight line, then before it come into the said line again, he shall with the increase of a pace deliver a thrust, at the length of the hinder arm, and then retiring his said pace, settle himself at his ward again.

### *Of the Partisan.*

If any would handle the Partisan in single combat, they shall not strike with the edge, because the time is too long, and they may easily be struck under the same. Therefore practicing the thrust, they shall use the selfsame offence and defence, which I have showed in the Javelin, to the which I refer them.

### *Of the Pike*

As among all other weapons, which are worn by the side, the single sword is the most honorable, as being such a one which is least capable of deceit of any other: So among the weapons of the Staff, the Pike is the most plain, most honorable, and most noble weapon of all the rest.

### *The Pike.*

Therefore among renowned knights and great Lords this weapon is highly esteemed, because it is as well void of deceit, as also, for that in well handling thereof, there is required great strength of body, accompanied with great valor and deep judgment: for there is required in the use thereof a most subtle & delicate knowledge and consideration of times, and motions, and a ready resolution to strike. These qualities may not happen or be resident in any persons, but in such as are strong of arms and courageous of stomach. Neither may they procure to get any other advantage in the handling thereof, than to be more quick and resolute both in judgment and hand than their enemy is. Therefore seeing every man may hereby know what is necessary for him so to handle it, as he may obtain victory thereby: let him resolve himself either to give it over quite, or else to handle it as he ought, and is required.

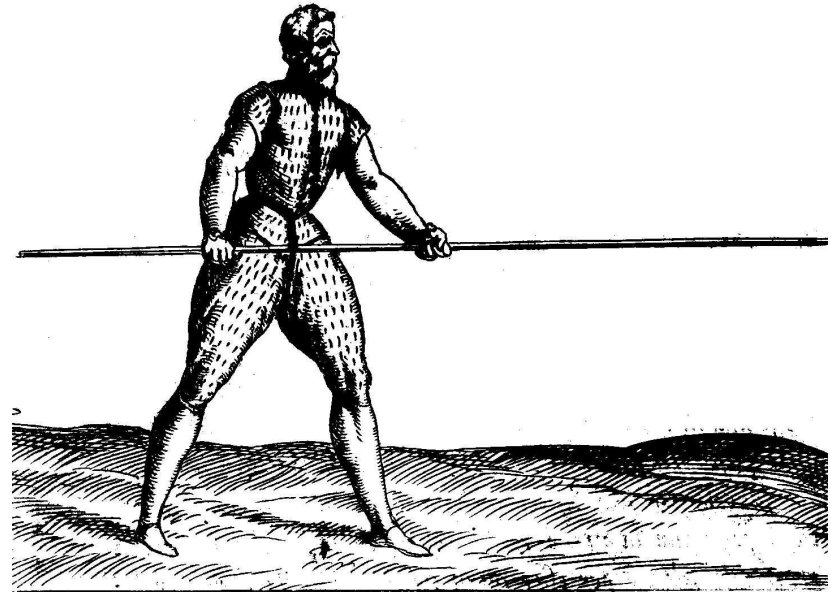
### *The manner how to handle the Pike.*

This renowned weapon has been of divers diversely handled, in single combat: (for the manner of using it in the wars, makes not at this present for my purpose.) Therefore it shall not be amiss, if (speaking of the manner of his use in these our days) I declare also mine opinion concerning the same. There have been some (who greatly regarding ease & little pain) would have the Pike to be born in the middle. Other some, more strong of arm, but weaker of heart, (to the end they might be the farther off, from hurt) accustomed to bear it at the beginning near the

### *The Pike.*

heel or blunt end thereof: which two ways in my judgment are to be refused, the one being too dangerous (I meant the bearing of it in the middle) the other too difficult (I mean, the bearing it at the blunt end,) because a man is not able to stand long at his ward, neither to defend himself strongly, nor offend safely, considering, much of his force is taken away, by sustaining and bearing it at the said end. So that, when a Forcible blow cometh he has not sufficient power to beat it off. And forasmuch as the Pike is a long straight line, which has his motion in the head or beginning thereof, which motion be it never so small, near the hand, is yet very great at the point, it is requisite, if he would strike just and straight, (when he so holds it at the end) that he be greatly practiced, and have great strength whereby he may be both skillful & able to bear it so just & even, that the point thereof strike or hit there where the hand & eye would have it. This is very hardly accomplished, as well because it is a thing impossible to strike by the straight line, as also for that the arms being weakened with the weight of the Pike, do shake and deliver it unsteadfastly. Therefore, for the avoiding of these two inconveniences, the Pike must be born within an arms length of the said heel or blunt end, in which place, it is sufficiently distant from hurt, & it is not born with much difficulty if the hands be placed an arms length one from another of the which the hinder hand must be steadfast, I mean, hold the Pike hard, and the forehand somewhat loose: So that the Pike may shift through it to and fro.

### *The Pike.*



*For what cause the Pike makes greater passage with the point than any other shorter weapon.*

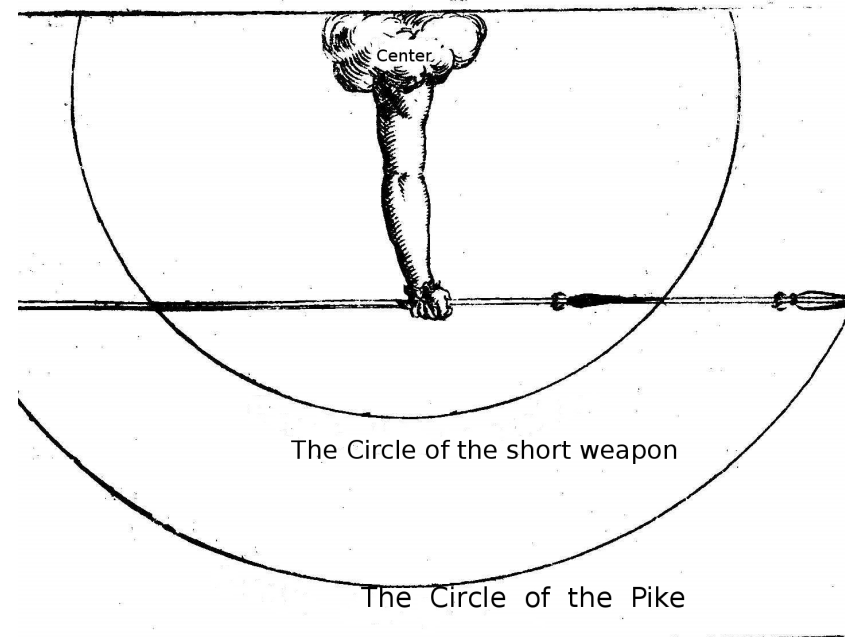
**I**t is most manifest, that the Pike makes greater passage with his point than any other weapon: and the two hand sword, more than the ordinary sword: & the sword more than the dagger. And among all weapons, this is generally true, that the longer the weapon is, the greater passage it makes with the point, and the greater blow with the edge. Neither doth this so chance, because the weapon is more heavy, neither because there is applied more force unto it in action, as most men suppose, but rather through a natural cause which is as followeth.

### *The Pike.*

If there be two circles, the one greater than the other, and are moved by one manner of motion, the greater shall be more swift than the less: for being greater in circumference & turning round, in the same time that the less turneth it must needs be, that it goeth more swiftly. So it cometh to pass, that one selfsame hand may deliver a greater blow with the two hand sword than with a single sword, and with a long sword, than one that is shorter, and with that, than with the dagger: And with a Bill, a greater blow, than with the two hand sword, and so likewise in all other weapons. Wherefore it is most clear, that of edgeblows that makes the greater stroke, which is delivered with the longer weapon. It remaineth now to be considered, how this falls out in the blows of the point. I say therefore, the blows of the point are also circular so that the Pike being very long, makes the greater circle, and by consequence the greater blow of the point or the greater thrust. That the blows of the point are circular, may be showed by this reason. The arm (being as a straight line, & fixed fast in one part, as for example in the shoulder, and movable in the other, as in the hand, standing I say, fixed as a straight line, and the one end moving from the other) then always move circularly: So that the arm cannot otherwise move, except when it is bowed, and would then make itself straight again, the which motion also is doubtful, whether it be straight yea or no. Therefore imagining that on the movable part of this arm, or straight line, there be also another thwart line, to wit, a Pike, a sword, or any other weapon, thus the arm moving, carries also, circu-

### *The Staff, &c.*

larly with it, the said thwart line: which line, by how much, the longer it is, by so much it makes the greater circle, as may be seen in this figure.



Whereby, it is manifest, that the Pike, the longer it is, it frames the greater circle, and consequently, is more swift, and therefore makes the greater passage. The like is to be understood of all other weapons, which the longer they are being moved by the arm, cause the greater edgeblow, and greater passage with the point.

### *Of the wards of the Pike.*

In mine opinion, if a man would either strike, or defend with the Pike, he may not otherwise use it,

### *The Pike.*

than by framing of two wards, in one of which, he shall strike the body from the middle upwards, & this I will term the low ward: the other shall strike the body from the middle downwards, & shall be called the high ward. Neither shall they be so termed for any other cause, than for that it is very necessary for him that striketh, first to beat off the enemy's Pike, & then to deliver his own. But yet it should breed great inconvenience, & there would be too much time spent if finding it good & commodious to strike in the low ward, he would first beat off the enemy's weapon, & then shift from the low to the high ward. For that cause I will frame the high ward, which shall be, when one beareth his arms high, & the point of the Pike low. And the low ward is, when the arms are low, & the point of the Pike high. There is another ward which would be framed as a mean between these two, & that is, when the Pike is born directly towards the enemy. And it falls out that it is most sure & long, when it is opposed against any of the other two aforesaid, because then a man is in case both to beat off the weapon & to enter therewithal with great advantage. But putting the case, the enemy do likewise directly oppose himself against this ward, then the Pikes may not beat off one another, but both parties are like to be invested & run through at one instant, without any defence or warding thereof. So that this straight ward may not be used except it be against one of the two aforesaid. And when the enemy standeth in any of the said two, then a man must resolutely bring his weapon into the said straight ward, for as he gets thereby the greater advantage both of length & time, so he may very easily beat off the enemy's Pike.

### *The Pike.*

#### *Of the manner how to strike in the said wards.*

When the enemy is in the low ward, a man ought always to stand either at the high or straight ward. And contrarily, in the low or straight ward, when the enemy is in the high ward. And must endeavor as forcibly and as nimbly as he may, first of all, to beat off the enemy's Pike, whether it be within or without, but yet in such sort, that he depart not much from the straight line, and be thereby constrained, to spend much time in returning thither again, And as soon as he has beaten off the enemy's weapon, to thrust, bearing his body contrary to his arms, to the end, he may be the more covered from the thrusts, and deliver his own thrusts with the more force, always regarding in the high ward, to thrust downwards, and in the low ward, upwards, & in the straight ward, in the middle; for this manner of thrusting, is very commodious, and consumes little time.

#### *Of the defence of the wards.*

The hurts of these wards, are defended in the selfsame manner, as those of the Javelin are, to which Chapter, (having there reasoned sufficiently) I refer you, to the intent I may not repeat one thing often.

And it is to be considered, that there is greater regard to be had of the times in managing this weapon than in any other, because it is not furnished with any forks, or other defences which may help a man, but all hope of victory consists in the judgment of the times, and in dexterity of delivery.

I will not therefore at this present stand to declare



*The Pike.*

any more of the true knowledge of the weapon, than that, which only appertaineth to be spoken in this work, but will hereafter at my more leisure, handle it more at large, at what time, it shall be known, that men (giving over all other false & vain kind of skirmishing) ought to settle themselves in this, by means whereof, their judgments are perfected, and they more insured under their weapons, and so by consequence are made more bold and hardy. And forasmuch as all this ought to be verified in deeds, and not in words, it shall be everyman's part, that will exercise himself in this Art, first diligently to learn the principles, & afterwards by exercise of the weapon to attain to the most subtle and delicate knowledge & consideration of the times, without which (as I have said elsewhere) it is not possible to profit therein. For although there be happily some, who (being strong of arm, and nimble in delivering falses, either right, reversed, or straight) have been in our time accounted for tall men, yet for all that, those who are skillful in this true Art, ought not to give credit unto it, because they know assuredly that not right or reversed edgeblows, get the mastery, but rather the thrusts of the point, neither the bestowing of them every way, but with advantage and in due time. Neither ought a man to strike, thereby to be struck again, (which is the part and point, rather of a brute beast, than of a reasonable man) but to strike and remain without danger. All which things by this true Art are easily learned.

*FINIS*

THE  
*Second Part entreating of De-*  
ceits and Falsings of Blows  
and Thrusts.

Being come to the end of the true art, and having declared all that which seemed convenient and profitable for the attainment of true judgment in the handling of the weapon & of the entire knowledge of all advantages, by the which as well all disadvantages are known: It shall be good that I entreat of Deceit or Falsing, as well to perform my promise, as also to satisfy those who are greatly delighted to skirmish, not with pretense to hurt or overcome, but rather for their exercise & pastime:

In which it is a brave and gallant thing and worthy of commendations to be skillful in the apt managing of the body, feet and hands, in moving nimbly sometimes with the hand, sometimes with the elbow, and sometimes with the shoulder, in retiring, in increasing; in lifting the body high, in bearing it low in one instant: in brief, delivering swiftly blows as well of the edge as of the point, both right and reversed, nothing regarding either time, advantage or measure, bestowing them at random every way.

But divers men being blinded in their own conceits, do in these actions certainly believe that they are either more nimble, either more wary & discrete

A a 1

### *Falsing of Blows*

than their adversary is: Of which their foolish opinion they are all beastly proud and arrogant:

And because it has many times happened them, either with a false thrust, or edgeblow, to hurt or abuse the enemy, they become lofty, and presume thereon as though their blows were not to be warded. But yet for the most part it falls out, that by a plain simple bumpkin having only a good stomach and stout courage, they are chopped in with a thrust, and so miserably slain.

For avoiding of this abuse, the best remedy is, that they exercise themselves in delivering these falses only in sport, and (as I have before said) for their practice & pastime: Resolving themselves for a truth, that when they are to deal with any enemy, & when it is upon danger of their lives, they must then suppose the enemy to be equal to themselves as well in knowledge as in strength, & accustom themselves to strike in as little time as is possible, and that always being well warded. And as for these Falses or Slips, they must use them for their exercise & pastimes sake only, and not presume upon them, except it be against such persons, who are either much more slow, either know not the true principles of this Art. For Deceit or Falsing is no other thing, than a blow or thrust delivered, not to the intent to hurt or hit home, but to cause the enemy to discover himself in some part, by means whereof a man may safely hurt him in the same part. And look how many blows or thrusts there may be given, so many falses or deceits may be used, and a great many more, which shall be declared in their proper place: The defence likewise whereof

### *Or Thrusts.*

shall in few words be last of all laid open unto you.

#### *Deceits or Falsings of the single Sword, or single Rapier*

**A**s I take not Victory to be the end and scope of falsing, but rather nimbleness of body and dexterity in play: So, casting aside the consideration how a man is either covered or discovered, and how he has more or less advantage, I say that there may be framed at the single sword so many wards, as there be ways how to move the arm hand and foot.

Therefore in falsing there may be framed the high, low, and broad ward, with the right foot behind and before: a man may bear his sword with the point backwards and forwards: he may bear his right hand on the left side, with his sword's point backward: he may stand at the low ward with the point backwards and forwards, bending towards the ground. And standing in all these ways, he may false a thrust above, and force it home beneath: and contrary from beneath above, he may false it without and deliver it within, or contrariwise.

And according to the said manner of thrusting he may deliver edgeblows, right, reversed, high and low, as in that case shall most advantage him. Farther he may false an edgeblow, and deliver it home: as for example, to false a right blow on high, and deliver home a right and reverse blow, high or low. In like sort the reverse is falsed, by delivering right or reverse blows, high or low.

### *Falsing of Blows*

But it is to be considered, that when he beareth his sword with his point backwards, he false no other than the edgeblow, for then thrusts are discommodious. And because men do much use at this weapon, to beat off the point of the sword with their hands: therefore he must in that case for his greater readiness & advantage, suffer his sword to sway to that side, whether the enemy beats it, joining to that motion as much force as he may, performing therein a full circular blow, and delivering it at the enemy.

And this blow is most ready, and so much the rather, it is possible to be performed, by how much the enemy thinks not, that the sword will pass in full circle that way, for the enemy being somewhat disappointed, by beating off the sword, after which beating, he is also to deliver his thrust, he cannot so speedily spend both those times but that he shall be first struck with the edge of the sword, which he had before so beaten off.

#### *General advertisements concerning the defences.*

**B**ecause it chanceth commonly, that in managing of the hands, men bear no great regard, either to time or advantage, but do endeavor themselves after divers & sundry ways & means to encounter the enemy's sword: therefore in those cases, it is very profitable to know how to strike, and what may be done in shortest time.

The enemy's sword is encountered always either above, either in the middle, either beneath: & in all these

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ways a man finds himself to stand either above, either beneath, either within, either without. And it falls out always that men find themselves underneath with the sword at the hanging ward, when they are to ward high edgeblows or thrusts: and this way is most commonly used: The manner whereof is, when the hand is lifted up to defend the sword being thwarted, and the point turned downwards: when one finds himself so placed, he ought not to recover his sword from underneath, and then to deliver an edgeblow, for that were too long, but rather to strike nimbly that part of the enemy underneath, which is not warded, so that he shall do no other than turn his hand & deliver an edgeblow at the legs which surely speedeth.

But if he find himself in defence either of the reverse or thrust, to bear his sword aloft and without, and not hanging, in this the safest thing is, to increase a pace, and to seize upon the enemy's hand or arm.

The selfsame he ought to do, finding himself in the middle, without and underneath: But if he find himself within, he cannot by any means make any seizure, because he shall be then in great peril to invest himself on the point of the enemy's sword.

Therefore to avoid the said point or thrust, he must turn his fist and deliver an edgeblow at the face, and withdraw himself by voiding of his foot towards the broad ward. And if he find himself beneath & have encountered the enemy's edgeblow, either with the edge, or with the false or back of the sword, being beneath: then without any more ado brought to cut the legs, and void himself from the

### *Falsing of Blows*

enemy's thrust. And let this be taken for a general rule: the body must be born as far off from the enemy as it may. And blows always are to be delivered on that part which is found to be most near, be the stroke great or little. And each man is to be advertised that when he finds the enemy's weapon underneath at the hanging ward, he may safely make a seizure: but it would be done nimbly and with good courage, because he doth then increase towards his enemy the straight line, that is to say, increase on pace, and therewithal take holdfast of the enemy's sword, near the hilts thereof, yea though his hand were naked, and under his own sword presently turning his hand outwards, which of force wrests the sword out of the enemy's hand: neither ought he to fear to make seizure with his naked hand, for it is in such a place, that if he should with his hand encounter a blow, happily it would not cut because the weapon has there very small force. All the hazard will be, if the enemy should draw back his sword, which causeth it to cut. For in such sort it will cut mightily: but he may not give leisure or time to the enemy to draw back, but as soon as the seizure is made, he must also turn his hand outwards: in which case, the enemy has no force at all.

These manner of strikings ought and may be practiced at all other weapons. Therefore this rule ought generally to be observed, and that is, to bear the body different from the enemy's sword, and to strike little or much, in as small time as is possible.

And if one would in delivering of a great edge blow, use small motion and spend little time he

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ought as soon as he has struck, to draw or slide his sword, thereby causing it to cut: for otherwise an edgeblow is to no purpose, although it be very forcibly delivered, especially when it lights on any soft or limber thing: but being drawn, it doth every way cut greatly.

### *Of sword and dagger, or Rapier and dagger.*

All the wards which are laid down for the single sword, may likewise be given for the sword and dagger. And there is greater reason why they should be termed wards in the handling of this, than of the single sword, because albeit the sword is born unorderedly, & with such disadvantage, that it wards in a manner no part of the body, yet there is a dagger which continually standeth at his defence, in which case, it is not convenient that a man lift up both his arms and leave his body open to the enemy: for it is neither agreeable to true, neither to false art considering that in each of them the endeavor is to overcome. And this manner of lifting up the arms, is as if a man would of purpose be overcome: Therefore, when in this deceitful and false art, one is to use two weapons, he must take heed that he bear the one continually at his defence, and to handle the other every way to molest the enemy: sometime framing one ward, sometimes another: and in each of them to false, that is, to feign a thrust, and deliver a thrust, to false a thrust, and give an edgeblow: and otherwise also, to false an edgeblow, and to deliver an edge

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blow. And in all these ways to remember, that the blow be continually different from the false: That is, if the thrust be falsed above to drive it home below: If within, yet to strike it without, and falsing an edgeblow about, to bestow it beneath: or falsing a right blow, to strike with the reverse: or sometimes with a right blow, but yet differing from the other. And after an edgeblow on high, to deliver a reverse below. In fine, to make all such mixture of blows, as may bear all these contrarieties following, to wit, the point, the edge, high, low, right, reversed, within, without. But, I see not how one may practice any deceit with the dagger, the which is not openly dangerous. As for example, to widen it and discover some part of the body to the enemy, thereby provoking him to move, and then warding, to strike him, being so disappointed: but in my opinion, these sorts of falses of discovering the body, ought not to be used: For it behooveth a man, first, safely to defend himself, and then to offend the enemy, the which he cannot do, in the practice of the said falses, if he chance to deal with an enemy that is courageous and skillful. But this manner of falsing next following, is to be practiced last of all other, and as it were in desperate cases: And it is, either to feign, as though he would forcibly fling his dagger at the enemy's face, (from the which false, he shall doubtless procure the enemy to ward himself, either by lifting up his arms, or by retiring himself, or by moving towards one side or other, in which travail & time, a man that is very wary and nimble, may safely hurt him:) or else instead of falsing a blow, to fling

### *Or Thrusts.*

the dagger in deed at the enemy's face. In which chance or occasion, it is necessary that he have the skill how to stick the dagger with the point. But yet howsoever it chance, the coming of the dagger in such sort, doth so greatly trouble and disorder the enemy, that if a man step in nimbly, he may safely hurt him.

These deceits and falses, of the sword and dagger, may be warded according as a man finds it most commodious either with the sword, or else with the dagger, not regarding at all (as in true art) to defend, the left side with the dagger, and the right side with the sword: For in this false art men consider not either of advantage, time, or measure, but always their manner is (as soon as they have found the enemy's sword) to strike by the most short way, be it either with the edge, or point, notwithstanding the blow be not forcible, but only touch weakly & scarcely: for in plain, so it touch any way, it is accounted for victory.

Concerning taking holdfast, or seizing the enemy's sword, I commend not in any case, that seizure be made with the left hand, by casting away of the dagger, as else where I have seen it practiced: but rather that it be done keeping the sword and dagger fast in hand. And although this seem impossible, yet every one that is nimble & strong of arm, may safely do it. And this seizure is used as well under an edgeblow, as under a thrust in manner following.

When the edgeblow or thrust cometh above it must be encountered with the sword without, on the third or fourth part of the enemy's sword, and with

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### *Falsing of Blows*

the dagger born within, on the first or second part thereof: having thus suddenly taken the enemy's sword in the middle, to turn forcibly the enemy's sword outwards with the dagger, keeping the sword steadfast, and as straight towards the enemy as is possible by means whereof it may the more easily be turned. And there is no doubt but the enemy's sword may be wrong out of his hand, and look how much nearer the point it is taken, so much the more easily it is turned or wrested outwards, because it makes the greater circle, and the enemy has but small force to resist that motion.

#### *Of Sword and cloak, or Rapier and cloak.*

**F**or to deceive the enemy with the cloak, it is necessary to know how many ways it may serve the turn, and to be skillful how to fold it orderly about the arm, and how to take advantage by the largeness thereof: and farther to understand how to defend, and how to offend and hinder the enemy therewith, because it falls not out always, that men fight with their cloak wrapped about the arm, and the sword in hand, Therefore it is the part of a wise man, to know also how to handle the cloak after any other manner.

Wherefore one may get the advantage of the cloak, both when it is about his body, and when it is folded about his arm: The cloak being about the arm in this manner. When it chanceth any man to bicker

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with his enemy, with whom he is at point to join, but yet happily wears about him at that instant no kind of weapon, whereas his enemy is weaponed, & threatens him, then by taking both sides of the cloak as near the collar as is possible, he may draw it over his own head, and throw it at his enemy's face, who then being entangled and blinded therewith, may either be thrown down or disfurnished of his weapon very easily by him that is nimble, especially if he have to deal against one that is slow. A man may after another manner take the advantage of the cloak which the enemy wears, by taking with one hand both sides thereof, near the collar: which sides being strongly held, cause the cloak to be a gin or snare about the enemy's neck, the which gin being violently hauled, and plucked with one hand, he may so forcibly strike him with the other on the face or visage, that he will go near hand to break his neck.

There be many other ways whereby one may prevail with the cloak, to the greatest part whereof, men of mean judgment may easily attain unto. Therefore when one has his cloak on his arm, and sword in his hand, the advantage that he gets thereby, besides the warding of blows, for that has been declared in the true art is, that he may molest his enemy by falsing to fling his cloak, and then to fling it in deed. But to false the flinging of the cloak is very dangerous, because it may not be done but in long time. And the very flinging of the cloak, is as it were a preparation to get the victory, and is in a manner rather true art than deceit, considering it is done by the

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straight or some other short line: neither for any other cause is this the rather here laid down, in deceit, than before in true art, than for that when one overcometh by these means, he seems not to conquer manfully, because he striketh the enemy before blinded with the cloak. Wherefore when one minds to fling his cloak, he may either do it from and with his arm, or else with his sword: and in so doing it is necessary, that he have not the cloak too much wrapped about his arm: I say, not above twice, neither to hold it straight or fast with his hand, that thereby he may be the better able when occasion serveth to fling it the more easily. If therefore he would fling it with his arm, and have it go with such fury, and make such effect as is required, he must of force join to the flinging thereof the increase of a pace, on that side where the cloak is, but first of all he must encounter, either find, either so ensure the enemy's sword, that by the means of the increase of that pace it may do no hurt.

And it is requisite in every occasion, that he find himself to stand without: and when either an edgeblow or a thrust comes, be it above or in the middle, as soon as he has warded it with his sword, he shall increase a pace and fling his cloak, howsoever it be folded, either from the collar, either from any other part, or else to haul it off from his shoulder, although it be on his shoulder: and in this order it is easily thrown, & is thereby the more widened in such sort, that the enemy is the more entangled and snared therewith.

Concerning the flinging of the cloak with the

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sword, I say, it may be thrown either with the point, either with the edge: with the point when one standeth at the low ward with the right foot behind, and the cloak before: In which case the cloak would be well and thick doubled and placed on the arm, but not wrapped. And instead of driving a thrust with the point which shall be hidden behind the cloak, he shall take the cloak on the point of the sword, and with the increase of a pace, force it at the enemy's face. And in this manner the cloak is so forcibly, and so covertly delivered and flung, that the enemy is neither aware of it, neither can avoid it, but of force it lights on his face, by means whereof he may be struck at pleasure in any part of the body.

The cloak may be flung or thrown with the edge of the sword when one standeth at the low ward, with the point of the sword turned backwards, on the left side and the cloak upon it, folded at large upon the arm up to the elbow: but not fast wrapped about it, and while he falses a reverse, he may take the cloak on the edge of the sword and fling it towards the enemy, and then strike him with such a blow as shall be then most fit for his advantage deliver.

Many other deceits there might be declared of the cloak, as well of flinging as of falsing it: but because I think there to be sufficient for an example to frame many other by, I make an end.

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#### *Of Sword and buckler, square Target and round Target.*

**B**eing of opinion that as touching deceit, there is but one consideration to be had of all these three weapons, and for because all the difference which may be between them is laid down and declared in the true art, in the consideration of the form of each of them: Therefore I am willing rather to restrain myself, than to endeavor to fill the leaf with the idle repetition of one thing twice.

All these three weapons ought to be born in the fist, the arm stretched out forwards, and this is evidently seen in the square Target and buckler: the round Target also, because by reason of his greatness and weight, it may not be held in the only fist, forward, in which kind of holding, it would ward much more is born on the arm, being stretched forth with the fist forwards, which is in manner all one, or the selfsame. Therefore one may false as much with the one as with the other, considering there is no other false used with them than to discover and frame divers wards, bearing no respect to any advantage. And yet there is this difference between them, that with the round Target, one may easily ward both edgeblows and thrusts, and with the square Target, better than with any other, he may ward edgeblows, because it is of square form: and the edge of the sword may easily be retained with the straight side thereof, which is not so easily done with the buckler: for over and besides the warding of thrusts, the buckler is not so sure of itself, but re-

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quires aid of the sword. Edgeblows also when they come athwart (for in that case, they encounter the circumference thereof: the which if it chance, the sword not to encounter on the diameter, or half, in which place the sword is only stayed, but doth encounter it, either beneath, either above the said diameter) may easily slip and strike either the head or thighs: therefore let every man take heed and remember, that in striking at the buckler, either with the point or edge of the sword, he deliver it crossing or athwart.

As concerning the falses and deceits, which may be used in the handling of these weapons, as at the single sword, they are infinite, so at these weapons they are much more, if the number of infinite may be exceeded. For besides, that with the sword one may false a thrust, an edgeblow, on high, a low, within, without, and frame divers other unorderly wards, There remaineth one deceit or false properly belonging unto these, which is, to bear the buckler, square Target, or round Target, wide from the body, and therewithal to discover himself, to the end the enemy may be hindered, and lose time in striking, being therewithal sure & nimble to defend himself & offend the enemy. And this he may practice in every ward, but more easily with the square Target than with the other two, because it is big and large enough, & may easily encounter and find the intents when it cometh striking: but this hapneth not in the round Target, because his form is circular, neither in the buckler, because, besides his roundness, it is also small: by means of which two things, blows are



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very hardly encountered except a man be very much exercised in the handling thereof. And because there are two weapons, the one of offence, and the other of defence: it is to be considered, that when by means of a false thrust or edgeblow, the enemy's round Target, square Target or buckler, is only bound to his ward, and his sword remaineth free and at liberty, one resolve not himself to strike immediately after the falsed thrust, for then he may very easily be hurt by the enemy's sword. Therefore let him remember for the most part, to false such thrusts, against the which, besides the weapon of defence, the sword be also bound to his ward, or else to false edgeblows from the knee downwards: for seeing the round target, or any of the other two, may not be used in that place, of force the sword must be there placed at his defence, which as soon as it is found, and thereby ensured that it may do no hurt, a man may then step forwards, and deliver such a blow as he best may without danger.

#### *An advertisement concerning the defences of the false of the round Target.*

**E**very time that one uses to false with round Target, square Target, and buckler, or as I may better say, with the sword accompanied with them, he falses either an edgeblow, either a thrust, either leaves some part of the body before discovered. Against all the falses of the edge, which come from the knee upwards, the round Target or any of the rest, must be oppressed, and then

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suddenly under them a thrust be delivered, against that part which is most disarmed. But if blows come from the knee downwards, they of force must be encountered with the sword, and always with the false, or back edge thereof, whether that the blow be right or reversed: & therewithal the enemy's leg must be cut with the edge prepared without moving either the feet or body. And this manner of striking is so short that it fairly speeds. Moreover, all thrusts and other edgeblows, as well high as low may, nay rather ought to be warded, by accompanying the target or other weapon of defence with the sword, whose point would be bent towards the enemy, & as soon as the enemy's sword is encountered, if it be done with the false edge of the sword, there is no other to be done, than to cut his face or legs.

But if the sword be encountered with the right edge then if he would strike with the edge, he must of force first turn his hand and so cut. And this manner of striking and defending, doth properly belong unto the round Target, square Target and buckler, and all other ways are but vain and to small purpose: for to encounter first and then to strike causeth a man to find himself either within the enemy's Target or sword, by which means he may easily strike, before either the sword or Target may ward again.

But if any man ask why this kind of blow carries small force, and is but weak: I answer, true it is, the blow is but weak, if it were delivered with an ax or a hatchet, which as they say, have but short edges, and makes but one kind of blow, but if it be delivered with a good sword in the foresaid

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manner, because it beareth a long edge, it doth commodiously cut, as soon as the edge has found the enemy's sword, and especially on those parts of the body which are fleshly and full of sinews. Therefore speaking of deceit or falsing, a man must always with the sword and round Target and such like, go and encounter the enemy's blows, being accompanied together. And as soon as he has found the enemy's sword, he shall within it, cut either the face or the legs, without any farther recovery of his sword, to the intent to deliver either thrusts, or greater edgeblows: for if one would both defend and strike together, this is the most short way that is.

But when the enemy discovers some part of his body, thereby provoking his adversary to strike, and then would beat off the blow and strike withal: in this case, either a man must not strike if he perceive not that his sword is more near the enemy, than his own Target is to the enemy's sword, or else if he strike and be further off, he must recover his sword & void the enemy's blow, striking commodiously either above either somewhere else. And it is a very easy matter to lose much time, for the Target and such like are heavy, And if these motions meet with no object or stay, they pass beyond their strength. But if it so happen or chance, as I have before said, that a man finds himself more near to hurt the enemy, than the enemy is ready to defend himself, then he must not false a blow first, & then recover his sword, but strike & drive it home at the first, as resolutely & as nimbly as he may possibly: & this manner of striking pertains rather to true art than to deceit or falsing.

### *Or Thrusts.*

#### *Of the falses of the two Swords: or Rapiers.*

**T**hese kind of weapons have so great liberty of striking or warding, and are so intermeddled the one with the other, as no other sort of weapon is, which I may compare with these. There may be framed an infinite company of wards with these weapons, and all of them sure, except two, which are framed and born without, and are these as follows.

To bear both swords with their points backward: for this manner of warding, is as if one would of purpose cause himself to be slain: or else to bear both aloft, which a man may hardly sustain, considering the weights of the swords are naturally heavy and tend downwards, so that the arms are much cumbered thereby. Therefore from these two which are framed without, shall be laid down, all those which may be found and may be framed in the handling of these weapons: as for example, high wards, low, wide, altered, diminished, and all those wards which are mixed, as to frame with one sword the high ward, with the other the broad ward, and to frame the low and broad ward, the high and low ward, two low wards and two broad wards: but yet these last two are as painful as the two high wards, and therefore shall not be used. Moreover, a man may bear one sword with the point forwards, and the other backwards, and he may further very easily find out and practice divers other ways, if he consider in how many ways a man may move his hands

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his arms, his feet, and his whole person: for each of these motions are sufficient of themselves, to alter the ward. In all these wards, he may with either hand and sword, practice to false against the enemy, sometimes by feigning, sometimes by discovery. And this is properly belonging to these weapons, to wit, to false with one, and to strike home, either with the selfsame, or with the other weapon: & likewise discover with the one, and ward with the selfsame, or with the other, the which never yet to this day was or might be done with any other weapon. For in the handling of other weapons, that which falses, doth in like manner strike home, so that of force, there are spent two times: for which consideration men hold opinion, that falsing is occasion both of great hurt, and also of loss of time. But yet this hapneth not in these weapons, which forasmuch as they are two, and are of equal power both in striking and defending, may be handled both after one fashion. And presupposing always that one is as skillful to handle the one as well as the other, he may discharge at selfsame time two thrusts, two edgeblows, both right & reversed.

But if he would exercise himself only in sport & play, he shall then continually use to strike his enemy with one, and defend his person with the other. Therefore when one deals against an enemy that has two swords, one of the which may always increase a pace and strike either with a thrust, or with the edge from that sword he must take heed to ward himself, for it is very forcible, and always bringeth great danger and peril with it: The other

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sword which was before, makes no increase of pace and therefore cannot strike more than the defence & strength of the arm will bear, and that is weak to strike, but yet very strong to defend: and the selfsame accidents and qualities, which are found to be in the enemy, are incident also to ourselves. Wherefore when one finds that he standeth with his right foot before, be it in any ward whatsoever, he may false with the fore sword and strike home with the same, or else he may false with his hinder sword, & strike with the selfsame: or else after a third way, to wit, to false with the one, and hit home with the other: And this kind of false, doth more properly belong to the two swords than any other, but yet he must take heed and very well remember that while he falses with the one, and would also strike home with the same, that he bear the other directly opposite against the enemy. For while the enemy is bound to ward the false, and home blow of the one sword, he may come in with the other and strike, if he find any place either discovered or easy to enter. So that bearing this rule continually in remembrance, which is in the fight of two swords, to bear always the one directly against the enemy to the intent to hinder him, that he resolve not himself to enter, he shall endeavor to false, sometimes with the one and sometimes with the other sword, sometimes a thrust, sometimes an edgeblow, and then to drive it home, either with the same sword that falses, or else with the other. But in the practice, and doing of all this, it is required that he be of deep judgment, knowing presently upon the false, what part of the body the enemy disco-

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vers, increasing thither, and investing the enemy with that sword which is most nigh to that part, and with the which he may most safely strike.

And it is to be considered, that it is a very strong & short way of striking, to false with the fore sword either a thrust or an edgeblow, and to false them not once or twice, but divers times, now aloft, now beneath, sometimes with a thrust, sometimes with an edgeblow, to the intent, to blind and occupy the enemy's both swords, and at the last when fit occasion serves, to strike it home with the hinder sword: but yet always with the increase of a pace. The false which may be practiced with the hinder sword, is unprofitable being made without the motion of a pace, for it is so short that it is to no purpose. Therefore it cannot busy the enemy's swords in such manner, that it may force him either to discover or disorder his body. From whence it may be gathered, that after this false of the hinder sword, it is no sure play to strike either with the selfsame hinder sword, or else with the fore sword, because the enemy was neither in any part discovered or troubled. The best thing therefore that may be done, if one would false with the hinder sword, is, to drive either a thrust or an edgeblow, resolutely striking with the increase of a pace, and as the enemy moveth defend himself, to strike him with the same sword, in same place that is discovered: For he cannot strike with the other sword, for that by means of the increase of the hinder sword, that sword which was before, remaineth now behind, So that it may not strike, except it increase a pace, and to increase again, were to spend

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much time. Therefore when one endeavors with the increase of a pace to force his sword within, he shall assay to strike it home, with the selfsame sword because as I have before said, to strike with the other were too long. Wherefore I will lay down this for a rule, in the handling of these weapons, that if a man false with the fore sword, he may also strike home with the same, or else with the other, so that he increase a pace. And if he false with the hinder sword, he shall presently, and resolutely force the blow home with the same sword, but yet with the increase of a pace: but if he do not fully deliver it, he shall again procure immediately to strike home with the selfsame sword, either with a thrust, or edgeblow, be it high or low, as at that instant shall be most commodious to serve the turn.

### *An advertisement concerning the defenses of the two Swords, or Rapiers.*

**I**n sport or play one may stand every way against the enemy, to wit, if the enemy be on high, to settle himself at his ward, low or broad. But it is more gallant to behold and more commodious indeed to place himself against the enemy in the very selfsame manner as he finds him, with the selfsame foot before, and in the very same site that he is in, either high or low. For standing in such manner, the enemy may hardly endeavor with his false, to trouble or busy both swords. And moreover it must be considered, that the fore sword is that which wards

### *Falsing of Blows*

both falses, and resolute blows, the which it doth very easily perform: For if it be born aloft, then by the bending of the point down, it defendeth that part of the body, to the which it is turned. Remembering therefore these rules, which are, to stand every way as the enemy doth, & to ward his falses with the fore sword, I say, where any falses or blows come: then as soon as he has warded them with the fore sword, he shall increase a slope pace, & with the hinder sword deliver either a thrust at some discovered place, either a right blow with the edge at the legs, or else (which is better) shall fetch a reverse, either athwart the face, or else athwart the arms, and this blow doth most easily speed: for the enemy's fore sword is occupied, and his hinder sword cannot come to oppose itself against this blow: neither may it so easily strike, because (by increase of the foresaid slope pace) the body is moved out of the straight line, so that the enemy may not so commodiously strike with his hinder sword, but that he shall be first struck on the face or on the arms.

Wherefore, let every man resolve himself, (as soon as he has encountered the enemy's sword with his own fore sword) that he step in and strike with his hinder sword. Neither, let him stand in fear of the enemy's hinder sword: for either it cannot hurt because the body is voided (as I have said,) or else, if it may, it must presently provide to stand to his defence, and thereto is so bound that it may do no manner of hurt.

**F**or the deceits & falses of the two hand sword, there is no more regard to be taken in the handling thereof single, that is, one to one, than there is, when it is used among many: only this end is to be purposed, to wit, to move and handle with all nimbleness and dexterity, as well the edge as the point, fetching those great circular and unruly compassings, therewith as his form, greatness, and manner of holding requires.

Neither ought a man so much to regard to fetch a small or great compass, or to strike more with the point, than with the edge, but must believe only that the victory consisteth in the nimble and active guiding there of any manner of way. Therefore there may be framed many wards, of all the which being a thing superfluous to reason of, I will handle only six of them, which are most commodious and usual: whereof the first may be called the high ward, the second the broad ward, the third, the low ward, from which there springeth all other three, towards the other side, making six in all.

The high ward is framed by bearing the sword and arms lifted up on high and wide from the body, with the point of sword turned towards that part, as that arm is, whose hand is placed by the cross, that is to say, if the right hand shall be at the cross, & the right foot before, to bear also the sword, with his point towards that side.

There is another high ward opposite to this & that is without moving the feet at all to turn the point towards the other side, that is, towards the left side

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### *Falsing of Blows*

and to cross the arms. And it is to be noted, that in this high ward, be it on what side it will, the sword is to be born with the point turned downwards.

The second is the broad ward, & must be framed with the arms widened from the body, not high but straight. And from this springeth and is framed another broad ward, turned towards the other side by crossing of the arms.

The third is the low ward, and in this the sword would be born with the point somewhat upwards. And this ward has his opposite or contrary, by turning the sword on the other side, and crossing the arms. There may be framed many other wards: As, for example, to bear the sword on high with the point backwards, to the intent to drive a down right, or cleaving edgeblow: or else to bear it low with the point backwards, to the intent to drive it from beneath upwards. But in these wards falses are to small purpose: And if there be any one of them worth the using, it should be the false of an edgeblow, the which at the two hand sword is not to be used at all, because there is much time lost considering that immediately after the false, he must strike home with an edgeblow. For it is not commodious at the two hand sword, to false an edgeblow, & deliver home a thrust because the weight or swing of the sword in delivering an edgeblow, transports the arms beyond their strength, so that they may very difficultly withhold the blow to such purpose, that they may be able as it were in that instant to deliver a thrust. Therefore the false that should be used at the two hand sword, ought always to be framed

### *Or Thrusts.*

with a thrust, and then an edgeblow right or reversed to be delivered, or else to false a high thrust, and deliver it beneath or elsewhere. But yet if one would needs false an edgeblow, let him do it with the false edge of the sword, then turning it in full circle, to deliver home the edgeblow, and in striking always to increase a pace. But when this false of the back or false edge is practiced, the arms being crossed, & that presently after the false, one would deliver home a reverse, then he must increase a left pace, And when he finds in himself any other ward, his hands not being crossed, then if he would step forwards to strike he must increase a pace with the right foot. And if in any of these wards he would false a thrust, which is the best that may be used at the two hand sword, he must observe the very same notes and rules concerning increasing of the pace. Further the thrust is falsed, and the edgeblow delivered home at the two hand sword for no other cause or consideration, than for that the said edgeblow is far more forcible than the thrust: For the two hand sword is long, by means whereof, in the delivery of the edgeblow, it makes a great circle. And moreover, it is so weighty that very little and small strength makes & forces the blow to go with great violence. But for as much as the striking with the edge is very dangerous considering it spends much time, and especially in the great compassing of the two hand sword, under which time wary & active persons may with sword or other weapon give a thrust, Therefore for the avoiding of this danger, he must before he determine with himself to strike with the edge, first drive on a thrust, ra-

### *Falsing of Blows*

ther resolute than falsed, and as far forwards as both arms will stretch. In doing of the which, he shall force the enemy to retire so much, that he may easily thereupon deliver his edgeblow with the increase of pace, nothing doubting that the enemy will strike home first with a thrust. Therefore when one standeth at the high ward, on either side he must false a thrust, & increase a pace delivering therewithal such an edgeblow, as shall be most commodious to serve his turn, either right or reversed. And further may practice the like in the broad and low wards, in either of the which, it is more easy to false the said thrust, than in the other.

And it is to be considered, when the edgeblow after the falsed thrust, is by a slope voided, that he suffer not his arms and sword by reason of the weight or swing thereof, to be so far transported beyond his strength, that the sword light either on the ground or that he be forced thereby to discover all that part of his body which is before. Therefore the best remedy is, as soon as he shall perceive that he has delivered his blow in vain, that he suffer his sword to go (not with a full thwart circle, and so about his head) until the point be backwards beneath in such sort, that the circle or compass direct him to the high ward, in the which he may presently resolve himself and return either to strike again, or else defend himself on either side, so handling his weapon, as shall in that case be most for his advantage.

### *Or Thrusts.*

#### *The Defences of the two Hand sword.*

**T**he defences of the two hand sword require a stout heart, for that the sustaining of such great blows, by reason whereof, a man considers not the advantage of time, being the most principle thing of all, causeth him to fly or retire back holding for a certainty that every blow given therewith, is not possible to be warded. Therefore when he deals against an enemy, who uses likewise the two hand sword, he shall oppose himself in the low ward: And when a false thrust cometh, if it come so far forwards that it may join home, he ought first to beat it off, and then to force a thrust at the enemy's face, or deliver an edgeblow downwards at the arms but not lifting up the sword in a compass. But for that these falsed thrusts for the most part are far off, & come not to the body, being used only to fear the enemy, and cause him to retire, that thereby one may have the more time to deliver an edgeblow with the increase of a pace (which pace causeth the blow to go with greater violence:) and farther may discern & judge, by nearness of the enemy, whether the blow will hit home yea or no, for it is easily known how much the arms may be stretched forth: Therefore when this false thrust doth not join or hit home, he ought not to endeavor to beat it off, but to expect when his enemy delivereth his edgeblow, & then to increase a pace, and strike him with a thrust.

But if it happen him to deal against a two hand sword, with a single sword or dagger, assuring himself that the two hand sword cannot hit him with a thrust or an edgeblow, for the defence of the thrust

### *Falsing of Blows*

he may beat it off and retire himself, but if it be an edgeblow, then, as soon as the two hand sword is lifted up, in the same time he must increase forwards and deliver a thrust, or else if he have no time to strike he must encounter & bear the blow in the first part of the sword, which is near the hilts, taking hold thereof with one hand, and striking with the other. And this he may perform, if he be nimble & active, because the two hand sword carries but small force in that place.

#### *Of the Partisan, Bill, Javelin and Halberd.*

**D**eceits or falses, are all more manifest and evident in these, than in short weapons which are handled only with one hand because both the arms are moved more slowly than one alone. And the reason thereof is, that considering they are more long, they therefore frame in their motions a greater compass: and this is perceived more in edgeblows than in thrusts. Therefore the best false that may be practiced in the handling of these weapons, is the false of the thrust, and that the edgeblow ought never or seldom to be used, except great necessity constrain, as shall be declared. Wherefore in these weapons, I will frame four wards, three of them with the point forwards, of which three, the first is, the point of the sword being born low, and the hinder arm being lifted up.

The second is, the point high, the right arm being behind and born low.

### *Or Thrusts.*

The third, the point equal and the arms equal: And in every one of these a man must false without, and drive it home within, or false within and deliver it without, or false aloft and strike beneath, & so contrariwise. But as he falses within or without, he ought to remember this note, which is, he must always to the intent he may go the better covered & warded, compass the hinder foot to that part, to the which the weapon shall be directed to strike home after a false.

The fourth ward which is much used, and especially with the bill, shall be to bear the weapon with the blunt end or heel forwards, the edge being lifted up on high. And this is much used, to the intent to expect the enemy's blows, and that thereby a man may be better able to ward them, either with the heel or middle of the staff, & then to enter & strike delivering an edgeblow with the increase of a pace, the which manner of striking is most ready and nimble. The false, which may be used in this ward, is when he has warded the enemy's blow with the heel of his weapon, & then would increase forwards to deliver an edgeblow, if the enemy shall lift up or advance his weapon to defend himself from the said blow, then he shall give over to deliver that blow, by retiring his weapon, and give a thrust underneath with the increase of a pace.

And this kind of blow is very likely to work his effect without danger, if it be aptly and nimbly used.



*Of the Pike.*

**T**here may be used some deceit also in the Pike although it be a weapon void of any crooked forks, and is much more apt to show great valor than deceit. And for as much as it has no other than a point to offend, and length to defend, for that cause there may be used no other deceit therewith, than with the point: & considering true art, is not the mark that is shot at in this place: I say, it may be born after divers fashions as shall be most for a man's advantage, as either at the end, either in the middle, either more backwards, either more forwards, as shall be thought most commodious to the bearer. Likewise, one may frame three wards therewith, to wit, the first straight, with the arms equal: the second with the point low, the third, the point high, falsing in each of them a thrust, either within, either without, either high, either low, and then immediately forcing it on resolutely, but contrary to the false, and carrying always the hinder foot towards that side, to the which the Pike is directed to strike. In handling of the pikes a man must always diligently consider, so to work that the hinder hand be that which may rule, drive on, draw back and govern the Pike, and that the forehand serve to no other purpose than to help to sustain it.

*The defences of the deceits of the weapons of the Staff.*

**I** have not as yet laid down the defence of the Bill, and the rest, because they are all one with this of the Pike. And I mind to handle them briefly all together, considering that in these

*To obtain Strength*

a man may not either render false for false, or take holdfast of the weapon. And although it might be done, I commend it not, because it is a very difficult matter to extort a weapon that is held fast with both hands. That therefore which one may do to defend himself, is to have recourse unto true Art, remembering so to ward the enemy's false, as if it were a true blow, and to strike before the enemy spend another time, in delivering his resolute thrust, And to take heed in delivery of his blows, that he be nimble and carry his body and arms so aptly and orderly applied, that the weapon wherewith he striketh may cover it wholly.

And here I make an end of deceit, in practicing of the which, there is this consideration to be had, so, always to false, that if the enemy provide not to ward, it may reach & hit home, because being delivered in such order, it looses but little time.

*The end of the false Art.*

*How a man by private practice may  
obtain strength of body thereby*

**I**f nature had bestowed strength upon men (as many believe) in such sort as she has given sight, hearing and other senses, which are such in us, that they may not by our endeavor either be increased, or diminished, it should be no less superfluous, than ridiculous to teach how strength should be obtained, than it were if one should say, he would instruct a man how to hear and see better than he doth already by nature. Neither albeit he that becometh a Painter or a Musician sees the propor-

### *To obtain Strength*

tions much better than he did before, or by hearing learns the harmonic and conformity of voices which he knew not, ought it therefore be said, that he sees or hears more than he did? For that proceedeth not of better hearing or seeing, but of seeing and hearing with more reason. But in strength it doth not so come to pass: For it is manifestly seen, that a man of ripe age and strength, cannot lift up a weight today which he can do on the morrow, or some other time. But contrary, if a man prove with the selfsame sight on the morrow or some other time to see a thing which yesterday he saw not in the same distance, he shall but trouble himself in vain, and be in danger rather to see less than more, as it commonly hapneth to students and other such, who do much exercise their sight. Therefore there is no doubt at all but that man's strength may be increased by reasonable exercise, And so likewise by too much rest it may be diminished: the which if it were not manifest, yet it might be proved by infinite examples. You shall see Gentlemen, Knights and others, to be most strong. and nimble, in running or leaping, or in vaulting, or in turning on Horseback, and yet are not able by a great deal to bear so great a burden as a Countryman or Porter: But, contrary in running and leaping, the Porter and Countryman are most slow and heavy, neither know they how to vault upon their horse without a ladder. And this proceedeth of no other cause, than for that every man is not exercised in that which is most esteemed: So that if in the managing of these weapons, a man would get strength, it shall be convenient for him to exercise himself in such sort as shall be declared.

For the obtaining of this strength and activity, three things ought to be considered, to wit, the arms, the feet and the legs, in each of which it is requisite that every one be greatly exercised, considering that to know well how to manage the arms, and yet to be ignorant in the motion of the feet, wanting skill how to go forwards

### *To obtain Strength.*

and retire backwards, causeth men often times to overthrow themselves.

And on the other side, when one is exercised in the governing of his feet, but is ignorant in the timely motion of his arms, it falls out that he goeth forwards in time, but yet wanting skill how to move his arms, he doth not only not offend the enemy, but also many times remaineth hurt and offended himself. The body also by great reason ought to be born and sustained upon his foundation, for when it bows either too much backwards or forwards, either on the one or other side, straight way the government of the arms and legs are frustrate and the body, will or nil, remaineth stricken. Therefore I will declare the manner first how to exercise the arms, secondly the feet, thirdly the Body, Feet & Arms, jointly.

### *Of the exercise and strength of the arms.*

**L**et a man be never so strong and lusty, yet he shall deliver a blow more slow and with less force than another shall who is less strong, but more exercised: & without doubt he shall so weary his arms, hands and body, that he cannot long endure to labor in any such business. And there has been many, who by reason of such sudden weariness, have suddenly despaired of themselves. giving over the exercise of the weapon, as not appertaining unto them. Wherein they deceive themselves, for such weariness is vanquished by exercise, by means whereof it is not long, but that the body feet & arms are so strengthened, that heavy things seem light, & that they are able to handle very nimbly any kind of weapon, and in brief overcome all kind of difficulty and hardness. Therefore when one would exercise his arms, to the intent to get strength, he must endeavor continually to overcome

weariness, resolving himself in his judgment, that pains it

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### *To obtain Strength*

not caused, through debility of nature, but rather hangs about him, because he has not accustomed to exercise his members thereunto.

There are two things to be considered in this exercise, to wit the hand that moveth, and the thing that is moved, which two things being orderly laid down, I hope I shall obtain as much as I desire. As touching the hand and arm, according as I have already said, it was divided in the treatise of the true Art, in three parts, that is to say, into the wrist, the elbow, and the shoulder, In every of the which it is requisite, that it move most swiftly and strongly, regarding always in his motion the quality of the weapon that is born in the hand, the which may be infinite, and therefore I will leave them and speak only of the single sword, because it beareth a certain proportion and agreement unto all the rest.

The sword as each man knows, striketh either with the point or with the edge. To strike edgewise, it is required that a man accustom himself to strike edgewise as well right as reversed with some cudgel or other thing apt for the purpose, First practicing to fetch the compass of the shoulder, which is the strongest, and yet the slowest edgeblow that may be given: Next and presently after, the compass of the elbow, then that of the wrist, which is more pressed and ready than any of the rest. After certain days that he has exercised there three kinds of compassing edgeblows one after another as swiftly as he may possible. And when he feels in himself that he has as it were unloosed all those three knittings or joints of the arm, and can strike and deliver strongly from two of those joints, to wit the *Elbow* & the *Wrist*, he shall then let the *Shoulder* joint stand, and accustom to strike strongly and swiftly with those two of the *Elbow* and the *Wrist*, yet at the length and in the end of all shall only in a manner practice that of the *Wrist*, when he perceiveth his hand-wrist to be well strengthened, delivering this blow of the *Wrist* twice or thrice, sometimes right, sometimes reversed, once

### *To obtain Strength*

right, and once reversed, two reverses and one right, and likewise, two right and one reversed, to the end that the hand take not a custom to deliver a right blow immediately after a reverse. For sometimes it is commodious, and doth much advantage a man to deliver two right, and two reversed, or else after two right, one reversed: and these blows, ought to be exercised, as well with one hand as with the other, standing steadfast in one reasonable pace, practicing them now aloft, now beneath, now in the middle. As touching the weight or heft, which is born in the hand, be it sword or other weapon, I commend not their opinion any way, who will for the strengthening of a man's arm that he handle first a heavy weapon, because being first used to them, afterwards, ordinary weapons will seem the lighter unto him, but I think rather the contrary, to wit, that first to the end, he do not over burden & choke his strength, he handle a very light sword, & such a one, that he may most nimbly move. For the end of this art is not to lift up or bear great burdens, but to move swiftly. And there is no doubt but he vanquishes which is most nimbly, and this nimbleness is not obtained by handling of great hefts or weights, but by often moving.

But yet after that he has sometime travailed with a light weapon, then it is necessary according as he feels himself to increase in strength of arm, that he take an other in hand, that is something heavier, and such a one as will put him to a little more pain, but yet not so much, that his swiftness in motion be hindered thereby. And as his strength increaseth, to increase likewise the weight by little and little. So will it not be long, but that he shall be able to manage very nimbly any heavy sword. The blow of the point or the thrust, cannot be handled without the consideration of the feet and body, because the strong delivering of a thrust, consists in the apt and timely motion of the arms feet and body: For the exercise of which, it is necessary that he know how to place them in every

### *To obtain Strength*

of the three wards, to the end, that from the ward he may deliver strongly a thrust in as little time as is possible. And therefore he shall take heed that in the low ward, he make a reasonable pace, bearing his hand without his knee, forcing on the thrust nimbly, and retiring his arm backward, and somewhat increasing his fore foot more forwards, to the end, the thrust may reach the farther: But if he chance to increase the fore foot a little too much, so that the breadth thereof be painful unto him, then for the avoiding of inconveniences. he shall draw his hinder foot so much after, as he did before increase with the fore foot. And this thrust must be oftentimes jerked or sprung forth, to the end to lengthen the arm, accustoming to drive it on without retiring of itself, that by that means it may the more readily settle in the broad ward, for that is framed (as it is well known) with the arm & foot widened outwards, but not lengthened towards the enemy. And in thrusting let him see, that he deliver them as straight as he can possibly, to the end, they may reach out the longer.

At what time one would deliver a thrust, it is requisite that he move the body & feet behind, so much in a compass, that both the shoulders, arm & feet, be under one selfsame straight line. Thus exercising himself he shall nimbly deliver a very great & strong thrust. And this manner of thrusting ought oftentimes to be practiced, accustoming the body & feet (as before) to move in a compass: For this motion is that which instructs one, how he shall void his body. The thrust of the high ward is hardest of all other, not of itself, but because it seemeth that the high ward (especially with the right foot before) is very painful. And because there are few who have the skill to place themselves as they ought to deliver the thrust in as little time as is possible. The first care therefore in this ward is, so to place himself, that he stand steadily. And the site thereof is in this manner, to wit: To stand with the arm aloft, and as right over the body as is possible, to the end he may force on the thrust without draw-

### *To obtain Strength*

ing back of the arm or loosing of time. And while the arm is born straight on high (to the end it may be born the more straight, & with less pains) the feet also would stand close and united together, & that because, this ward is rather to strike than to defend, and therefore it is necessary that it have his increase prepared: so that when the thrust is discharged, he ought therewithal to increase the fore foot so much that it make a reasonable pace, and then to let fall the hand down to the low ward, from the which if he would depart again, and ascend to the high ward, he must also retire his fore foot, near unto the hinder foot, or else the hinder foot to the fore foot, And in this manner he shall practice to deliver his thrust oftentimes always placing himself in this high ward with his feet united, discharging the thrust with the increase of the fore foot. But when it seemeth tedious and painful to frame this ward, then he must use, for the lengthening of his arm, to fasten his hand and take holdfast on some nook or staff, that standeth out in a wall, as high as he may lift up his arm, turning his hand as if he held a sword, for this shall help very much to strengthen his arm, and make his body apt to stand at his ward. Now when he has applied this exercise, for a reasonable time, so that he may perceive by himself that he is nimble and active in delivering these blows and thrusts simply by themselves, then he shall practice to compound them, that is to say, after a thrust to deliver a right blow from the wrist, then a reverse, and after that another thrust, always remembering when he delivereth a blow from the wrist, after a thrust to compass his hinder foot, to the end, he would discharge a reverse, he must increase a slope pace, that presently after it, he may by the increase of a straight pace, force on a strong thrust underneath. And so to exercise himself to deliver many of those orderly blows together, but yet always with the true motion of the feet and body, and with as great nimbleness, and in as short

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time as is possible, taking this always for a most sure and certain rule, that he move the arms & feet, keeping his body firm and steadfast, so that it go not beastly forward, (and especially the head being a member of so great importance) but to keep always his body bowed rather backward than forward, neither to turn it but only in a compass to void blows and thrusts.

More over, it shall not be amiss, after he has learned to strike, (to the end to strengthen his arms) if he cause another to force at him, either with a cudgel, or some other heavy thing, both edgeblows & thrusts, and that he encounter & sustain them with a sword, & ward thrusts by avoiding his body, and by increasing forwards, And likewise under edgeblows, either strike before they light, or else encounter them on their first parts, with the increase of a pace. that thereby he may be the more ready to deliver a thrust, and more easily sustain the blow. Farther, when he shall perceive, that he has conveniently qualified and strengthened this instrument of his body, it shall remain, that he only have recourse in his mind to the five advertisements, by the which a man obtaineth Judgment. And that next, he order and govern his motions according to the learning & meaning of those rules. And afterwards take advise of himself how to strike & defend, knowing the advantage in every particular blow. And there is no doubt at all, but by this order he shall attain to that perfection in this Art which he desireth.

FINIS.